THE OFFICIAL SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE

SEGA No.1 FOR SATURN

£2.75

ISSUE 10

AUGUST 96

WIN!
A COPY OF NIGHTS AND A 3D JOYPAD!
SEE OUR COMPO INSIDE!

ATHLETE KINGS

Limber up for the best Olympic Games sim ever!

VIRTUA FIGHTER KIDS

A new generation of fighters explodes onto Saturn!

Forget Everything Else!

This is the GREATEST game of the year!

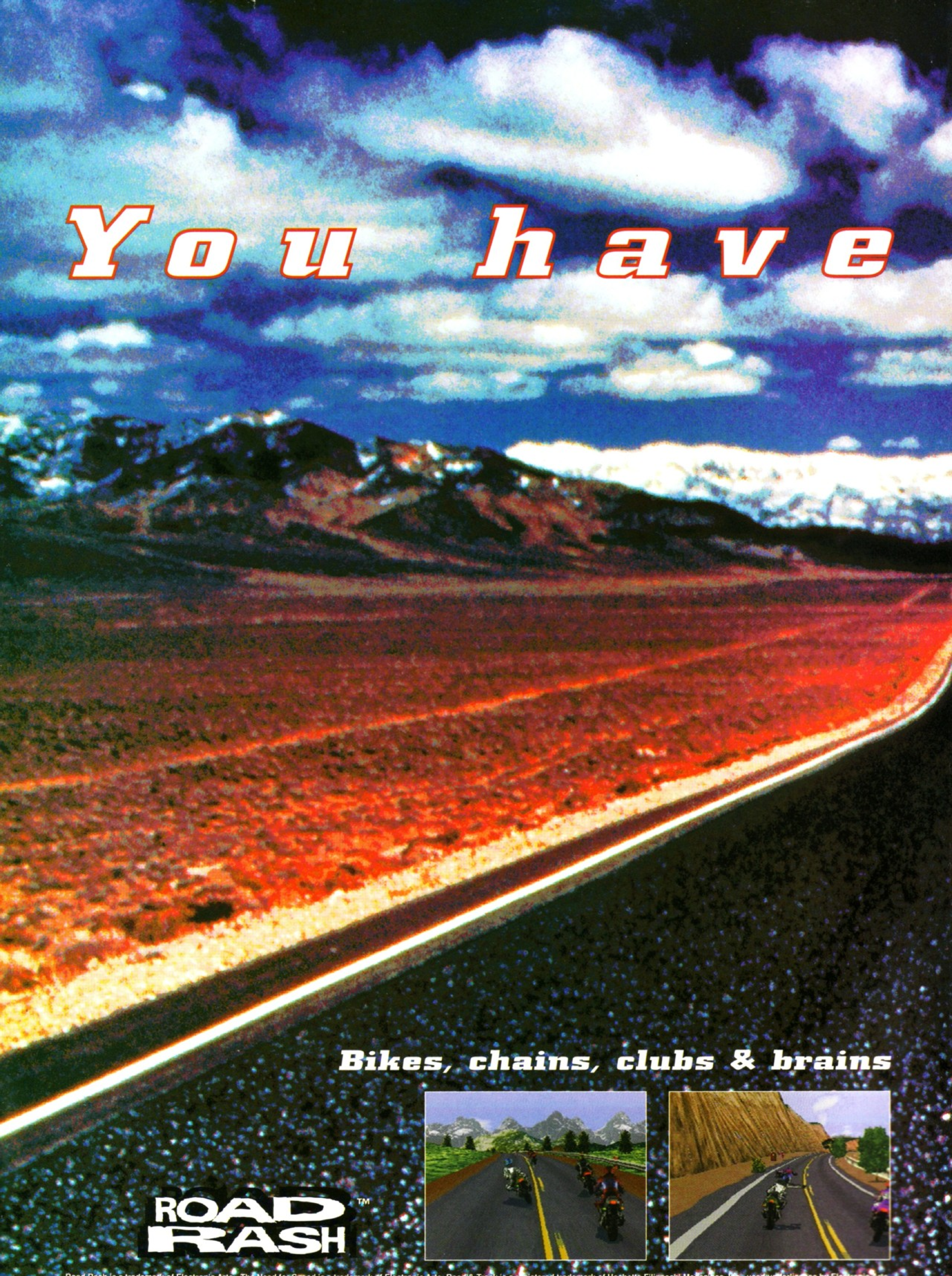
NiGHTS

REVIEWED!

It's a dream come true! Full review and eight -page feature inside!

PLUS! BUG TOO! VIRTUA FIGHTER 3 ALIEN TRILOGY TOMB RAIDER TORICO OLYMPIC FOOTBALL KEIO FLYING SQUADRON STARFIGHTER 3000 AND MORE!

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SEGA SATURN NEWS

VERDICT? IT'S BRILLIANT!

Well, we're all pretty bleary eyed at the moment, from a marathon session playing NiGHTS. There's no doubt about it, this is absolutely the most addictive game we've had in the office all year! In fact, when this first arrived, there was a huge crowd around the TV for hours and people were even standing on the tables to get a look at the game! Luckily, as we've played it so much, we're in the best position to tell you all about the ins and outs of each level, which is why we've dedicated eight pages to it later on in the issue! It's been a pretty good month for software all round really, with both AM3's Athlete Kings and AM2's Virtua Fighter Kids featured this month – the good news is that both of these titles will see a UK release later on in the year. More about that later on in the issue though – in the meantime, read on for details of how to win the very first UK copy of NiGHTS and a 3D controller!

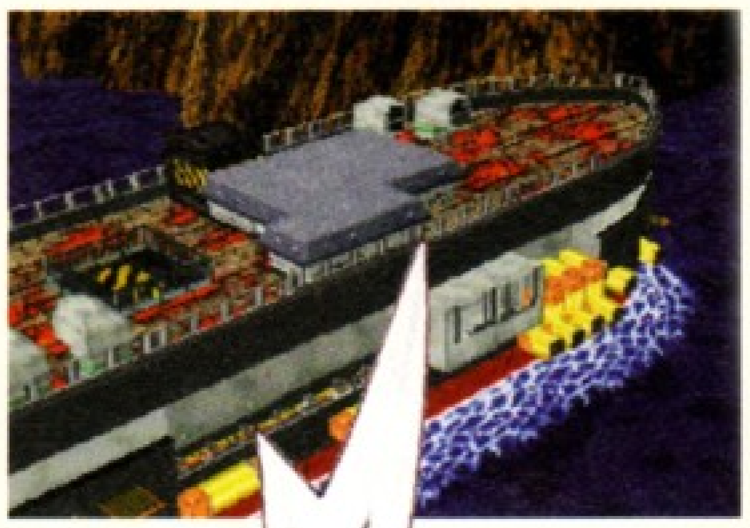


Sam Hickman, Editor

DARK SAVIOUR NEARS COMPLETION!

Dark Saviour is almost finished and although the text within the title is still in Japanese, it shouldn't be too long before a UK version reaches these shores! Sega were so impressed with the game that they have decided to sign it up for release themselves meaning that a UK release should be definitely on the cards. Created by Climax, Dark Saviour has been in development for over a year now, and is probably the most ambitious RPG ever seen on the Saturn. Played from an isometric perspective, the game includes much more action than has been seen in previous RPGS on the Saturn such as Mystaria, and technically, it's loads more impressive. For instance, there's transparency effects, impressive bosses, loads of nice 3D bits and a great storyline too – one which DOESN'T involve wandering around landscapes exterminating trolls. Basically, you're stranded on a boat with a crew and a huge big monster. Unfortunately, the monster has escaped, leaving a trail of dead bodies all around the ship, although the monster itself is nowhere to be found. Obviously, it's your job to track down the monster and save all the people on the boat, which is why you've been decked out in a suit of armour and been given a pet bird to follow you around. We still haven't worked out the significance of the bird, but it's probably very important indeed.

















In addition to the great graphics of the game, this is unique in that you can change the perspectives as you're playing, enabling you to see around blocks and revealing parts of the game that would otherwise be obscured.

The release of Dark Saviour will be a major event for Sega, as the title is so innovative – and is certainly unique in the fact that there's nothing like this on any system at the moment. We'll have a full showcase on the game for you next month, but in the meantime, here's some shots from the latest version for you to have a look at.





TORICO



The action adventure title has been largely unexplored on the Saturn, unlike the PC, where there's an avalanche of titles every month – and very popular they are too. Games like D have proved to be pretty successful on the Saturn, but have been criticised for not being long or innovative enough – which we think is probably fair enough although D was pretty enjoyable. Anyway, Torico looks set to change the image of interactive movie style games forever, with an incredibly dark setting and very involving gameplay. In fact, although the game isn't out for another couple of months, the Japanese are already going mad about it, which can only mean that once translated, the title will be big over here too. Basically, the main aim of the game is to discover the mystery behind a very spooky Spanish town, which you somehow end up in after escaping from jail. Everyone in the town is incredibly weird, and the character you play ends up getting stabbed right at the beginning of the game, which leads to some even more strange encounters.



Anyway, Torico seems to be pushing the interactive adventure much further than anything has before, with puzzles to solve and action scenes as well as the usual wandering around alien environments looking at pretty objects. In fact, the entire adventure has a film feel to it, especially as most of the characters look like something out of a Quentin Tarantino film. Sega have signed up the title for release over here. although there's no firm release date at the moment. Look out for more info on this one, just as soon as we get our hands on a version with UK text.

WIN! A COPY OF NiGHTS AND A 3D CONTROLLER!



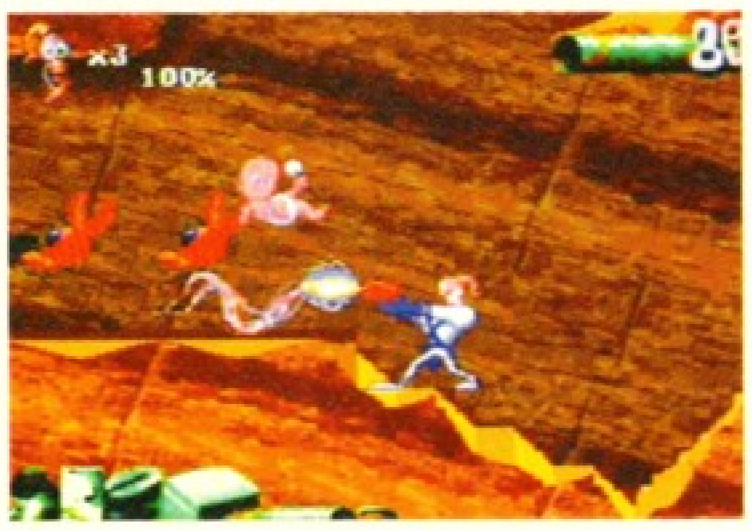


If you skipped the news section and read the NiGHTS showcase and review first, then you'll already know how brilliant the game is. In fact, you'll probably be wanting to know how you can get hold of a copy of your very own. Well, the simple fact is that you can't. And that's because the game isn't out officially until September 5th. Which depending on when you bought the magazine, means you 'll have up to seven weeks to wait. But aha! If you're a loyal reader, there's a chance you could get your hands on a copy of this excellent game way before everyone else – but you'll only be in the running if you enter our competition. Bear in mind, there's only one winner, and that lucky person will be the first in the UK to own a copy of NiGHTS and a new posh 3D controller. As ever, all you have to do is answer the question below, and the first correct entry out of the bag on the closing date will receive the prize, so please don't call us up asking if you've won – if you have we'll contact you. Anyway, here's the question:

Q: What was the creepy, evil character in Nightmare on Elm Street called?

Send your answers on a postcard to: I'M FRIGHTENED, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU. In order for us to get the prize out in time, the closing date for this competition will be 20th August, so be sure to get your entries in before then.

Hi! My name is Jim. I want to be your friend. Will you be my friend? Thankyou.





GET YOUR WORMS OUT...AGAIN





Earthworm Jim enjoyed an amazing run of success on the Megadrive, mainly due to its innovative trickery and a wicked sense of humour. Rumours of a Saturn-only conversion were flying around a couple of months ago, but it seems this version of EWJ will be released across all formats in the coming months. The eventual publisher is likely to be Virgin, but even they have remained uncharacteristically tight-lipped over the title.

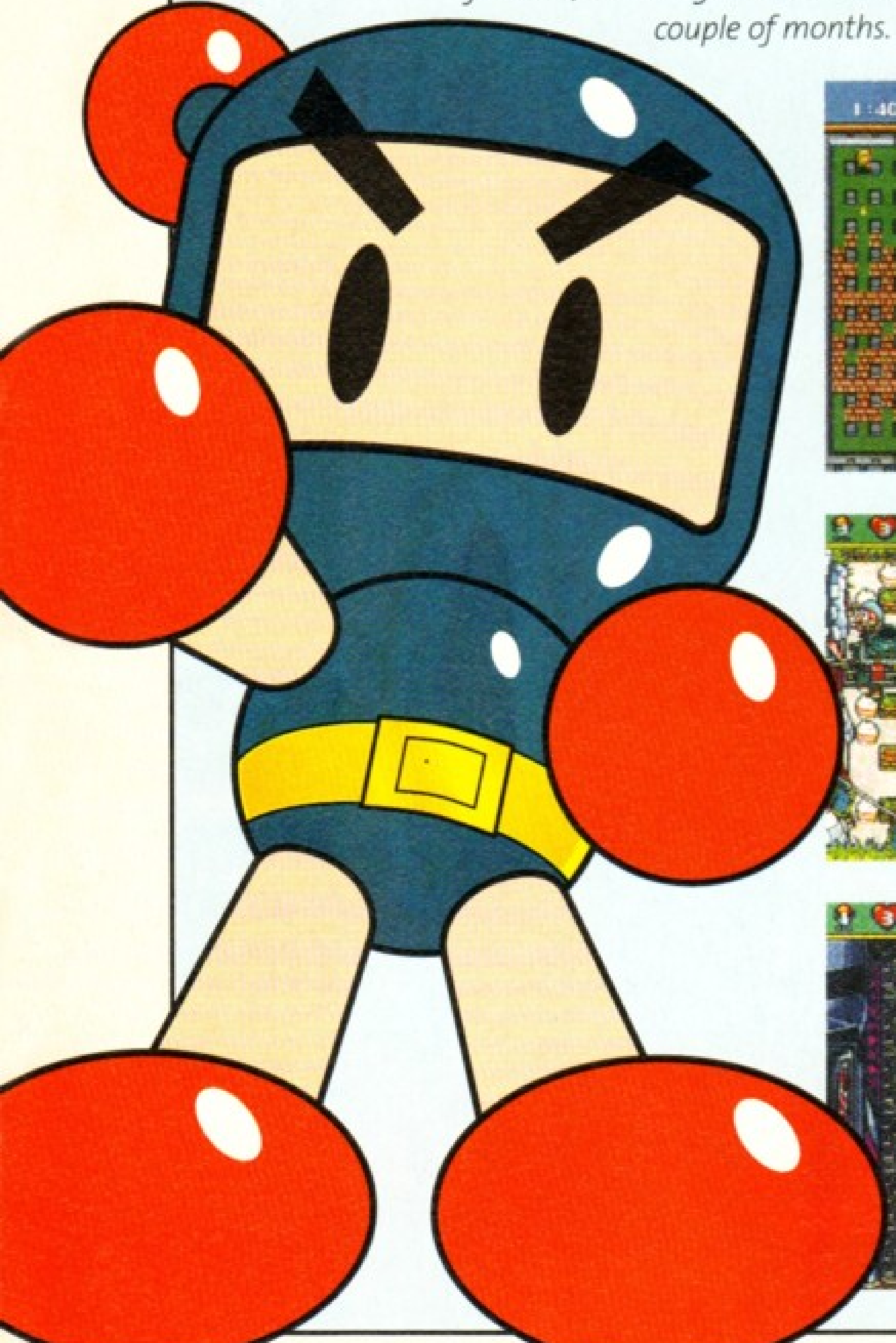
Anyway, from what we saw of the title at the E3 show, the Saturn version (in fact all the 32bit versions) is not actually all that different from the 16-bit version, which is a bit disappointing really when you think about what could have been done with the game. Even so, anyone who missed out on the second game because they'd already bought a Saturn will no doubt jump at the chance to get hold of this one – it's certainly excellent fun even though it's not exactly pushing the Saturn's technical capabilities. A nice stop gap until we get to see some 32-bit product from Shiny.

BOMBS AWAY!

Bomberman's coming to Saturn! And with any luck, he'll be coming to the UK too! The Saturn version of the game is already complete and although it hasn't been signed up for release in this country yet, it's been rumoured that Sega will sign the game up for release under their own name.

Bomberman has always been extremely popular on console, and this version should be no exception either –especially since it incorporates a ten player option! Yep, it's hard to imagine ten people playing Bomberman at once, but believe us, this will be absolutely brilliant!

Another bonus point for the title is the fact that it will only be released on the Saturn – you won't find developers Hudsonsoft porting this across to the Playstation! There's no specific release dates for the title yet, although as it's almost finished, it's thought that it could be on the shelves within a couple of months. We'll keep you posted!









SEE THE CROW!





This one has been in development for so long, that almost everyone has forgotten that the film ever existed. Every one that is except for Acclaim who are determined to get the game out on the shelves by early Autumn. Apparently the title will tie in with the second Crow movie which will be released this summer (convenient, eh?) and will take the form of a 3D combat game, where the player can fight up to four opponents at any one time. This is another title that is currently unplayable at the moment, but a video of the game was up and running at the E3 show. The verdict? Well, if this one's going to be a hit, the programmers still have a lot of work left to do. More soon.

I CAME, I SAW,...



As revealed by SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE in our last issue, smash hit Command and Conquer will be released on the Saturn sometime later in the year, with a whopping six-month lead over the Playstation version, which is unlikely to b released at all his year.

Anyway, last month, we brought you news of the conversion, but no actual Saturn screenshots. But, this month we've managed to get hold of a bona fide Saturn shot. As you can see, the two versions (Saturn and PC) are practically identical and work on the Saturn version is storming ahead, with the game currently standing at around d 30% complete.

This title is going to be absolutely massive come Christmastime and has won many awards from the PC community for its excellent gameplay. Will be a sure fire hit with all strategy fans and is sure to win buckets of other converts too.



BLOCKBUSTER VIDEO CHARTS

TOP TEN ViDEO GAMES

1. PANZER DRAGOON 2
2. STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 2
3. SHELLSHOCK
4. TITAN WARS
5. TRUE PINBALL
6. THE HORDE
7. WIPEOUT
8. SEGA RALLY
9. BATTLE AREA TOH SHINDEN REMIX
10. GEX

TOP TEN RENTAL

1. SEVEN
2. ACE VENTURA2: WHEN NATURE CALLS
3. GOLDEN EYE
4. ASSASINS
5. CRIMSON TIDE
6. AMERICAN PRESIDENT
7. FRENCH KISS
8. MURDER IN THE FIRST
9. BRAVEHEART
10. APOLLO 13


1


2

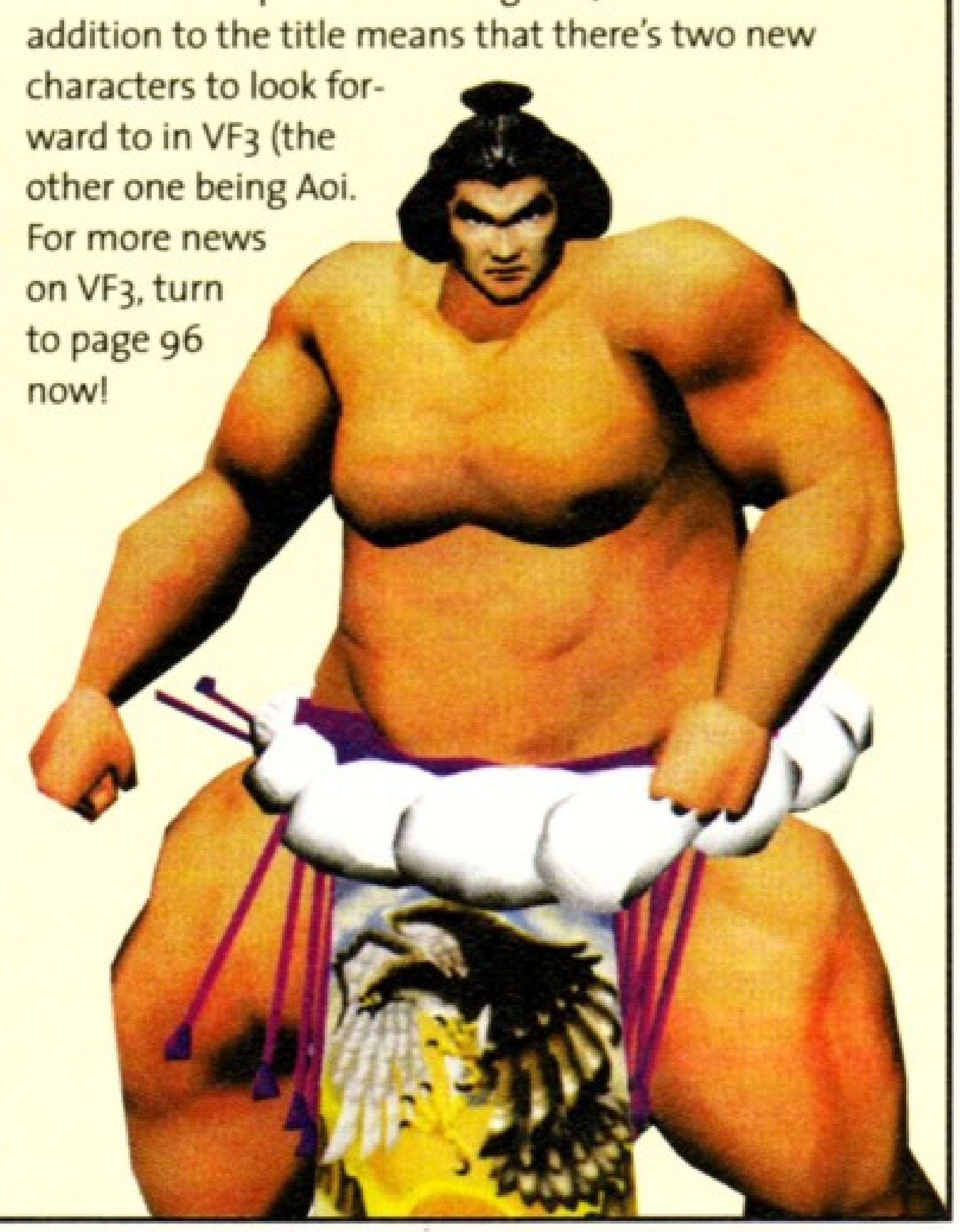
BLOCKBUSTER VIDEO®

AM2 UNVEIL NEW VF3 CHARACTER!

Last month, AM2 released details on another character that will appear in the awesome Virtua fighter 3. Known as Taka Arashi, this huge sumo wrestler will prove to be more than a match for the other competitors in the game, and this addition to the title means that there's two new characters to look forward to in VF3 (the other one being Aoi. For more news on VF3, turn to page 96 now!







GET YOUR ORDERS IN!

Sega's new Analogue Joypad will be on sale at the same time as NiGHTS, which at the moment is scheduled for a September 5 release. A pack-in deal containing both the game and the joypad is thought to be going on sale for £59.99, and a standalone for £24.99. Demand for the add-on is likely to be very high, so if you want to be sure to get your very own pad, make sure you order one just as soon as you can.





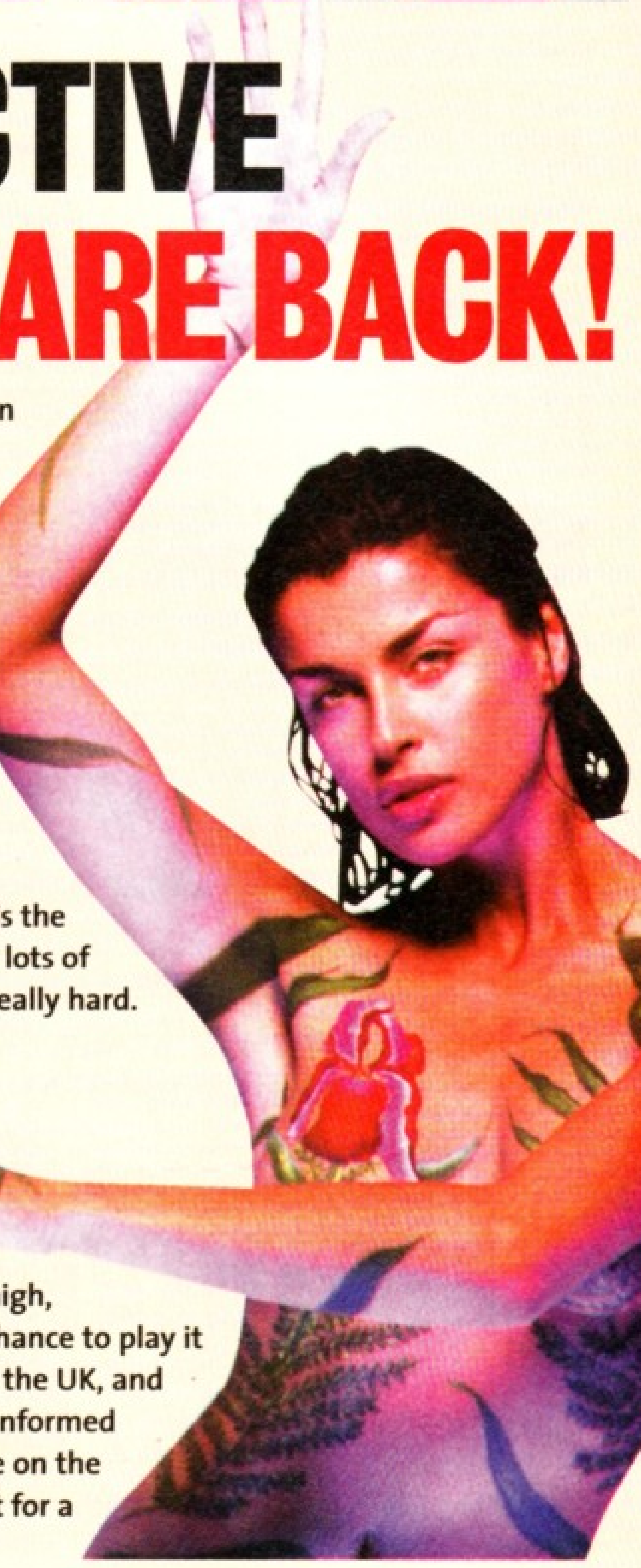








INTERACTIVE MOVIES ARE BACK!



Interactive movies have been a bit thin on the ground since the "Double Switch" days of the Mega-CD, but they've always been pretty popular in the US, which is no doubt the reason why Segasoft (they of Bug Too! and 3 Dirty dwarves fame) have decided to create an all new interactive movie adventure for the Saturn.

Entitled Sacred Pools, the main thread of the story involves a very sparsely clothed young woman, who is the uberbabe of the sacred pool. She fires lots of lasers around all the time and looks really hard.

Although development on the title has only just begun, we have seen an early version of the game and the standard of the FMV is very high, although we haven't actually had a chance to play it yet. This will definitely be released in the UK, and although no release date has been conformed at the moment, the title is likely to be on the shelves in the early Autumn. Look out for a preview soon!

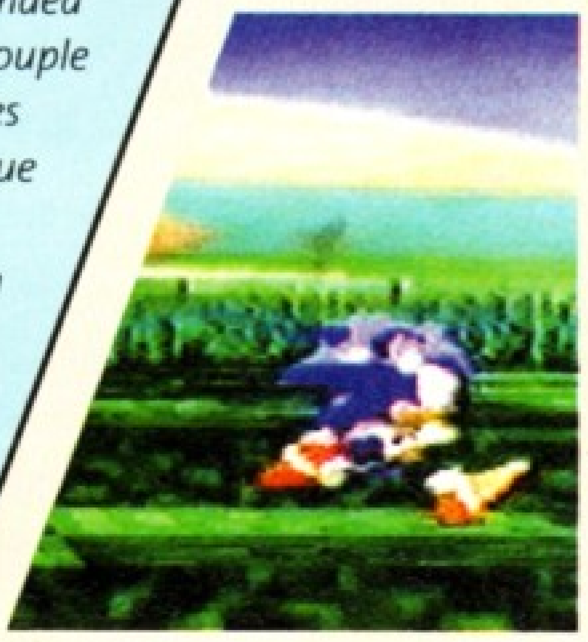
MORE *SONIC!*

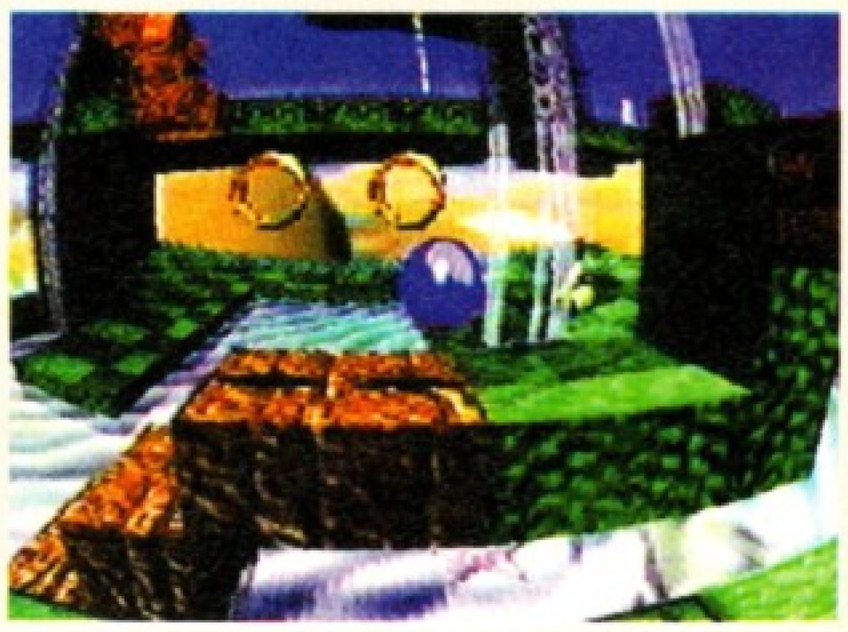
The new Sonic game was unveiled to thunderous applause at the recent E3 show, but since then, the game, along with its creators, seems to have gone into hibernation, with no new versions of the title arriving at the moment. The reason for this is probably that the programmers worked so hard to get the E3 version together and it will be some time before any new versions are unveiled. However, Sonic X-treme will still be out by Christmas and you can expect to see extended coverage of the title coming up in the next couple of months. Anyway here's a few extra pictures that we didn't manage to get into the last issue – the pictures are taken from a video, so they aren't as high quality as you'd expect to get from the actual game. But, Sonic X-treme still looks fantastic, and when the new versions do finally arrive, it's likely that there will be loads more impressive features in to be found in the game! Stay tuned for more info!





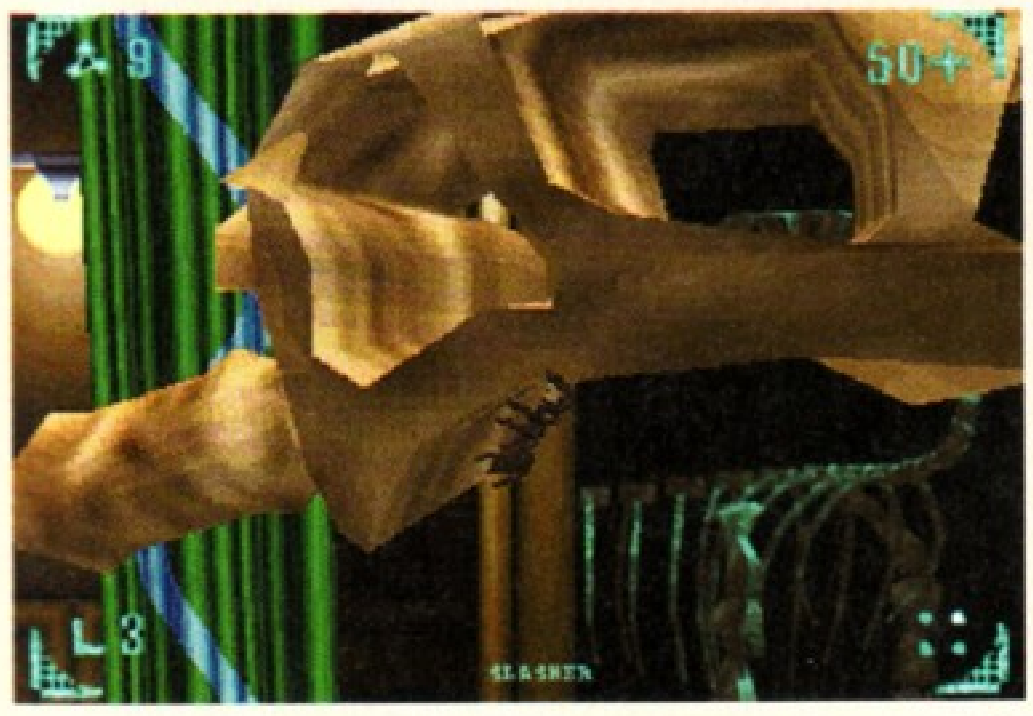






LOADS OF NEW TITLES

BMG have just announced their Autumn/Winter line up, and among the vast amount of stuff on offer is a fair few Saturn titles. And here they are:



TARANTULA

Sort of a shoot 'em up but with a big deadly spider instead of a submarine or something. Pit your creepy crawly against load of other nasty insects and see who comes out on top. Our bet, of course, is on the big nasty spider.



TANK

Obviously, this is a game about a tank. Take your tank around various urban environments and smack the living daylights out of just about everything. The graphics are already looking very sophisticated on this one, although it's still pretty early in development. More as soon as we can get anything on the title.





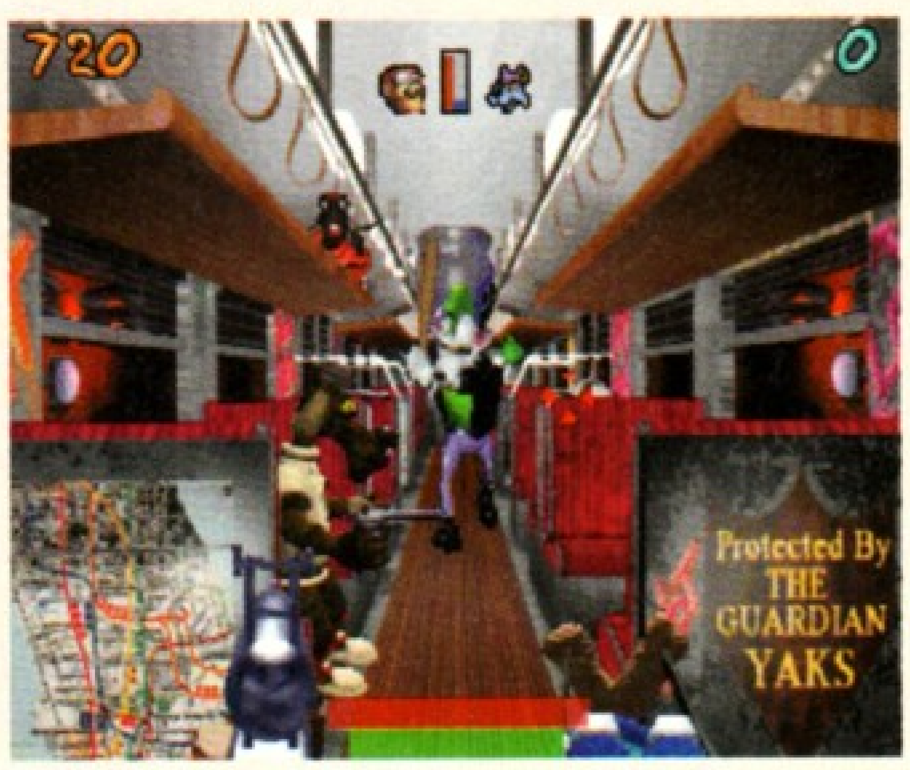


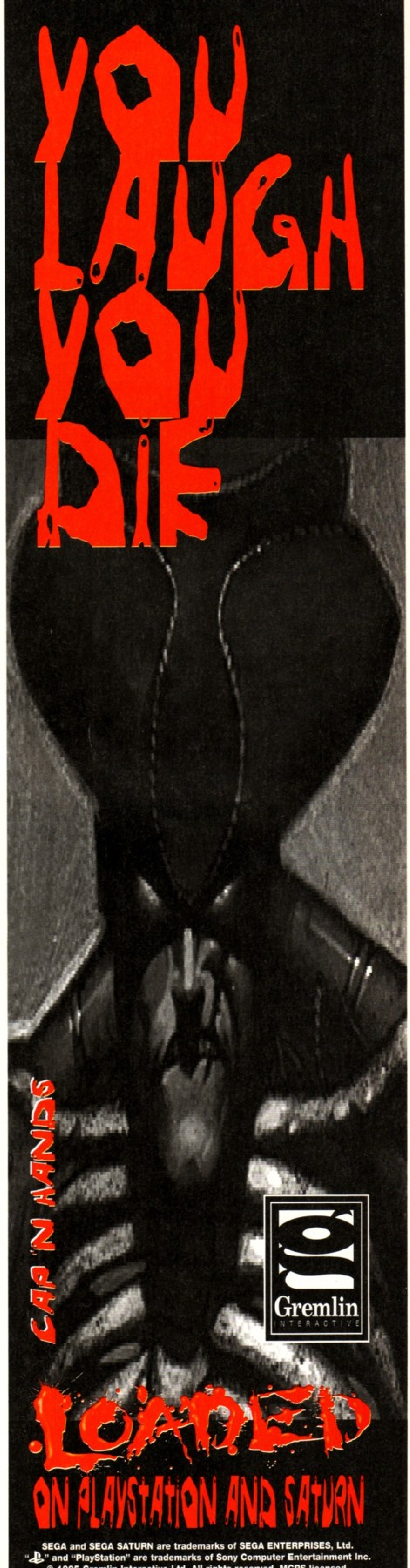


FIRO AND KLAWD

Guide these two groovers through various scrapes in their own psychedelic version of the world at large. It's a sort of arcade adventure, but there's a few other styles in there too. Ignore the purple loons and big pink shades – this could be big although there's not much to see on the title just yet!







HMV CHARTS
Week ending April 29th, 1996

KNOW HMV • KNOW GAMES

	Title	By
1	Baku Baku Animal	Sega
2	Guardian Heroes	Sega
3	Euro Championship '96	Sega
4	Wrestlemania	Acclaim
5	Virtua Cop	Sega
6	Virtual Open Tennis	Acclaim
7	Sega Rally	Sega
8	FIFA '96	EA
9	X-Men: Children of the Atom	Acclaim
10	Streetfighter Alpha	Virgin

SATURN MAGAZINE CHARTS

1	NiGHTS	Sega
2	Virtua Fighter Kids	Sega
3	Athlete Kings	Sega
4	Baku Baku Animal	Sega
5	Guardian Heroes	Sega
6	Sega Rally	Sega
7	Baku Baku Animal	Sega
8	Streetfighter Alpha	Virgin
9	Darkstalkers	Virgin
10	Euro '96	Sega

READER CHARTS

Sent in by Simon Russel of Bristol. Si, a game is on the way to you!

1	EURO '96	Sega
2	Baku Baku Animal	Sega
3	Virtua Fighter 2	Sega
4	Streetfighter Alpha	Virgin
5	X-Men: Children of the Atom	Acclaim
6	D	Acclaim
7	Virtua Cop	Sega
8	Sega Rally	Sega
9	Guardian Heroes	Sega
10	Panzer Dragoon Zwei	Sega

If you would like to see your chart features, send in your top ten to READER CHARTS, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU. Anyone who has their charts printed will receive a game for their troubles!

WEAR A SILLY HAT

Following just about every other major software publisher, Sega are sponsoring their very own festival this summer, which will take place between 2-4 August. The Earth Energy Music Festival will be held at Beddington park, East Croydon, and has three separate days for Jazz, Dance and Soul. Featuring names such as Courtney Pine, Mica Paris, and Alison Limerick, plus dance acts Orbital, Jah Wobble, LTJ Bukem, DJ Rap and Fabio, with licensed bars, wind powered marquees and of course, interactive entertainment from Sega, should be one of the biggest festival events of late summer.

Tickets cost an arm and a leg to the average guy on the street, but we have three pairs of tickets to give away to the first readers who answer this question correctly:

Q: Which famous English festival was NOT held this year?

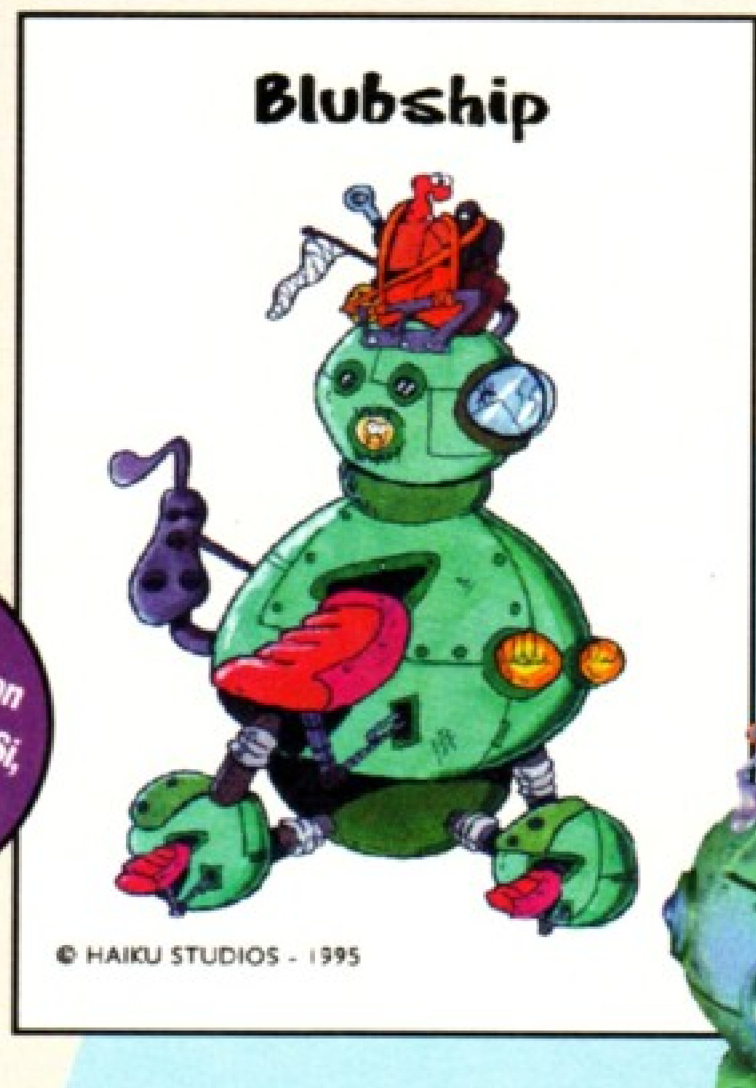
Answers to: FROLIC IN THE FIELDS, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU. The first correct entries to reach our offices will receive the tickets.

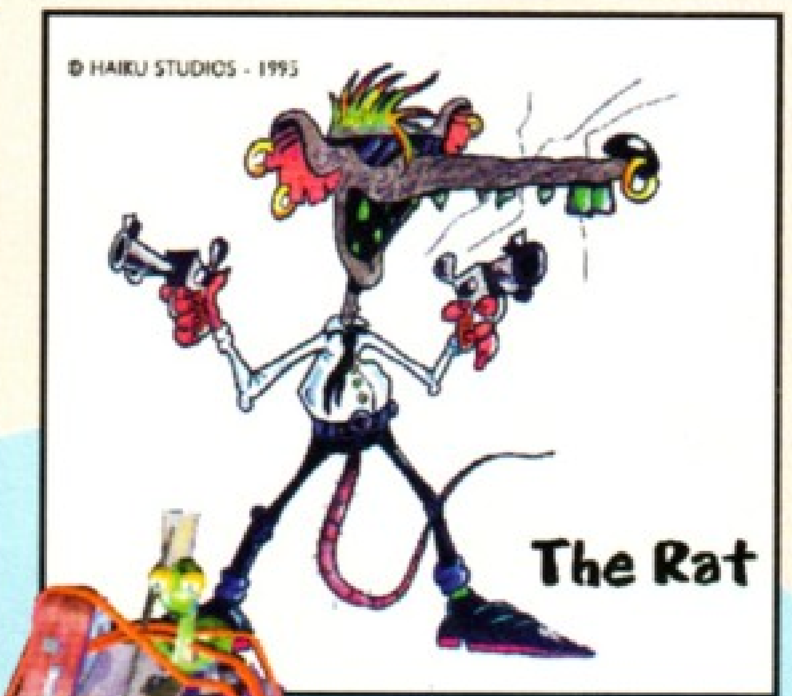
If you want to buy tickets for the event, call Ticketmaster on (0171) 344 4444

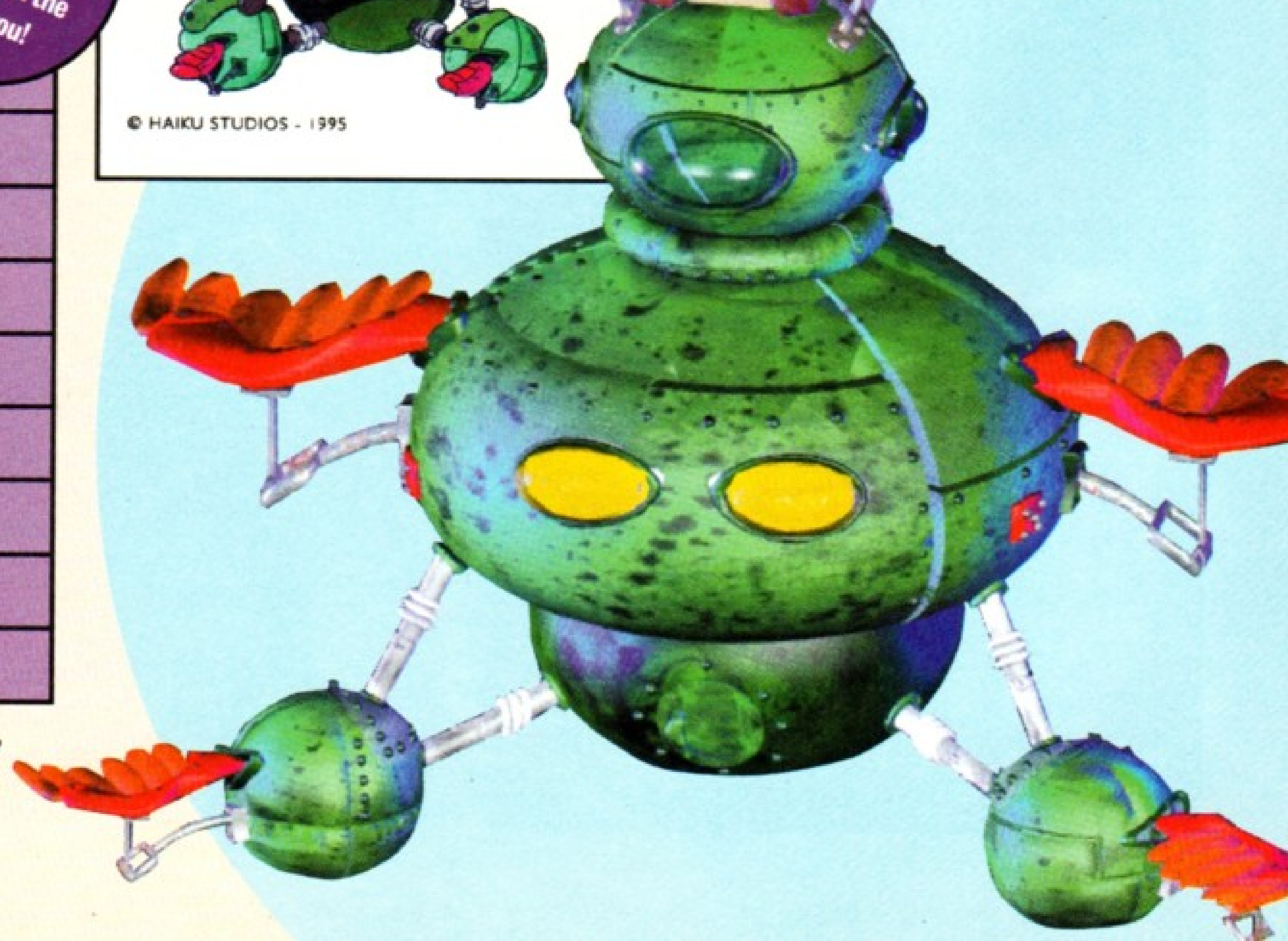
CHEER UP!

Last issue, we announced that Philips will be bringing their back catalogue of titles to the Saturn in the near future. However, they also have a bunch of new games up for release over the next year too. Down in the Dumps is a point-and-click adventure starring a family of aliens who are about as big as a thumbnail. They decide to take a holiday on Earth, but find that things aren't quite what they're cracked up to be – in fact, they get into all sorts of scrapes.

This won't be out until next year, but we've already seen a demo of the title (on PC only) – here's a few character sketches until we can get hold of some proper pics.









EVERY NIGHT, BEFORE I GO TO BED, I PUT OXY MEDICATED CREAM ON MY FACE. IT WORKS WHILE I SLEEP, UNBLOCKING MY PORES. AND BECAUSE I USE IT EVERY NIGHT IT KEEPS THEM CLEAR, HELPING TO PREVENT SPOTS AND BLACKHEADS. OK, SO I'M A ROUTINE FREAK. BUT I'M NOT A SPOTTY ROUTINE FREAK.



SPOTS? OXYCUTE 'EM WITH OXY 10!

OXY 10 TREATMENT FOR SPOTS CONTAINS BENZOYL PEROXIDE · ALWAYS READ THE LABEL · OXY AND OXYCUTE 'EM! ARE TRADE MARKS.

COMING SOON

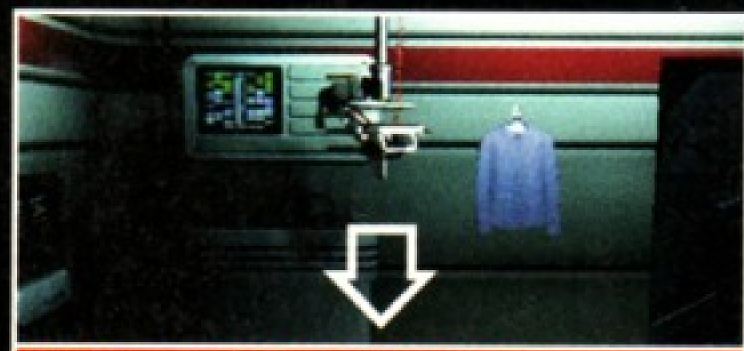
This month sees the overspill from the E3 show – basically there were loads of games shown that we couldn't fit in last month, so they've had to appear in this section instead. Chances are that most of them will appear in the Autumn, so you can look forward to a wealth of choice later on in the year. In the meantime though, here's a load of titles in development!

ENEMY ZERO

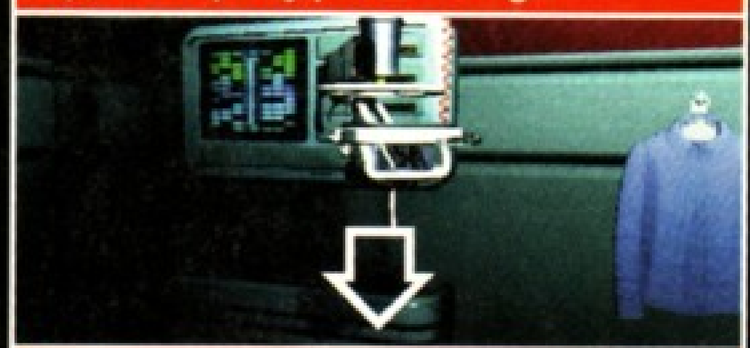
BY WARP | RELEASE TBA

These guys caused a storm a couple of months back when they announced that they were stopping developing for the Playstation and concentrating on the Saturn only. And why was everyone so bothered? Well, because they all want to play their creepy adventures. Ha! Serves them right for buying a Playstation!

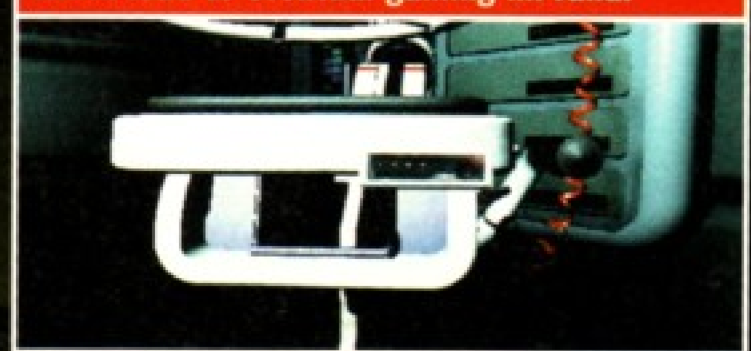
Anyway, you'll be glad to hear that Warp have almost completed their second adventure, and the emerging graphics seem way more creepy than heir first offering, D. The game features the same girl from the first adventure, Laura, although this time she must solve a spooky puzzle in space. As all of the text is in Japanese, it's a bit difficult to tell what's going on with the story, but it's another mystery-type adventure with loads of blood and plenty of sinister characters. Although their first title was criticised for being too short and made up of little more than CG screens, it was very impressive in visual terms, and Warp are hoping to better the standards they set for this second adventure. At the moment, a UK publisher is still to be decided although it's pretty certain that Acclaim will pick up the rights to the title as they released the first game. More on this one just as soon as we can get hold of a version of the game.



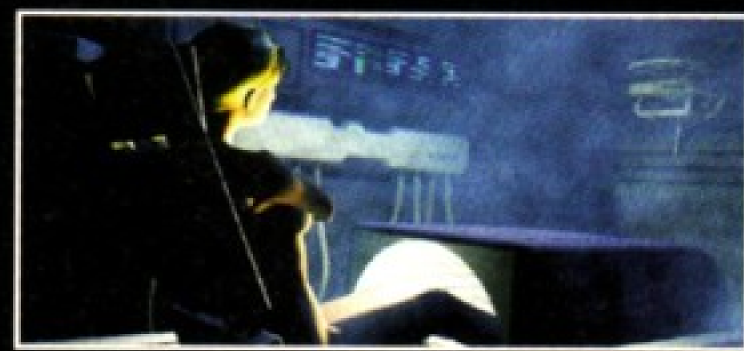
Yep, more spooky puzzle solving...



...will lead to eventual gaming nirvana.







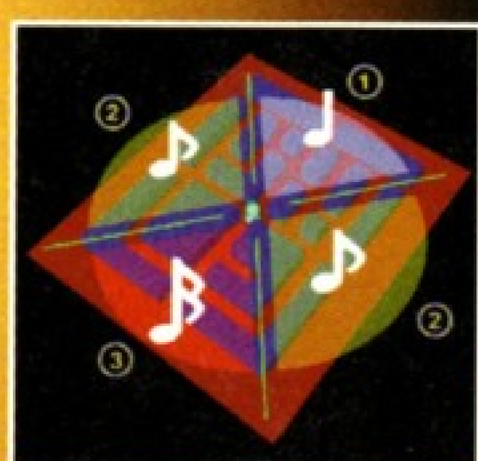
Blimey. She's not a shy girl, is she? Anyway, I don't know how Laura got from her father's house to being a top astronaut type, but no doubt it has something to do with being a vampire. Well that's what happened in the first game. Allegedly.











If anyone's played Myst then they'll probably recognise this bit. It looks like you have to repeat different music notes to make a little tune. Aah, that's lovely, isn't it?







RAYMAN 2

BY UBISOFT RELEASE TBA







When Rayman was released almost a year ago, there wasn't much in the way of platform games available for the Saturn. In fact, there still isn't. But even so, Rayman still received a rather stern reception from the games press, probably because despite looking the part, the gameplay remained distinctly 16-bit. Luckily that's all about to change for the sequel, with Rayman making much more of an effort for his second adventure.

So, while the sequel is still a platformer, there's quite a lot that's new for this little goblin type guy. For example, much more use is made of 3D than in the first title and the action is far more fast paced than before. On a first playtest, this seemed to be much more in-depth than before and dare we say it, actually seemed fun! This is another one due for a late Autumn release, although it's already in a fairly advanced state – expect to see a preview next month.



As you can see, there's loads more monsters in the second game than there was in the first, which should mean that there's loads more depth to the game too. Should do well if it stays on course.



It looks really good, even at this early stage. More on this one soon.







STREET RACER

BY UBISOFT RELEASE TBA

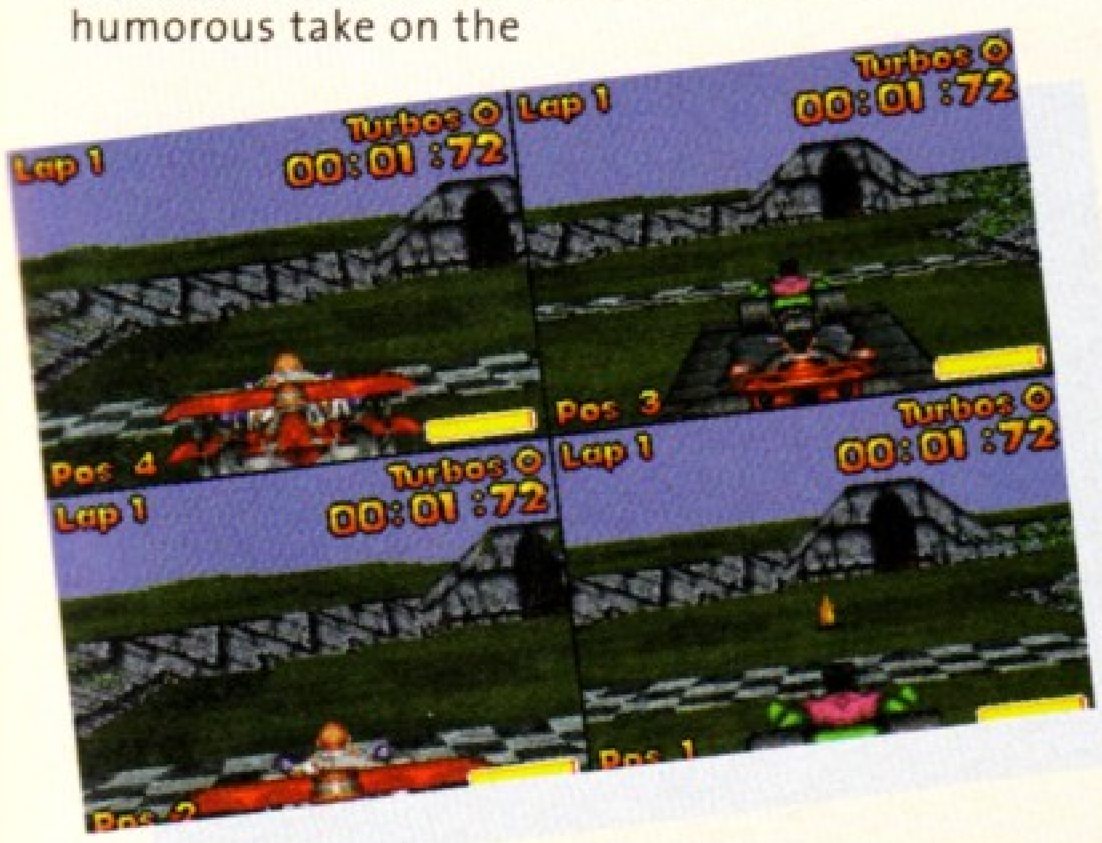
In some ways, Street Racer on the Megadrive was the Sega answer to Mariokart. It was really fast, had loads of wacky cartoon characters and even had a four player split screen option. There was certainly nothing else like it on the 16-bit machine.

There's nothing else like it on the Saturn at the moment either, especially when you consider that Ubisoft are planning to incorporate an eight player split-screen option into the Saturn version of events. Now that's what we call ambitious. The screen will be split into eight horizontal strips, and will need the use of a Sega tap to get 8 players on screen at once – from these screenshots, it certainly looks like it will be very chaotic!

As for the rest of the game, the 3D is much improved over the 32bit version and the graphics are already looking very nice indeed. With any luck this should be a welcome addition to the Saturn's portly portfolio of racing games, and it's probably the first humorous take on the genre that the Saturn's seen. How it will stand up to Codemaster's excellent Micro Machines 3 is anyone's guess, but at the moment it's certainly looking like it will be a high profile title. More in a couple of months.





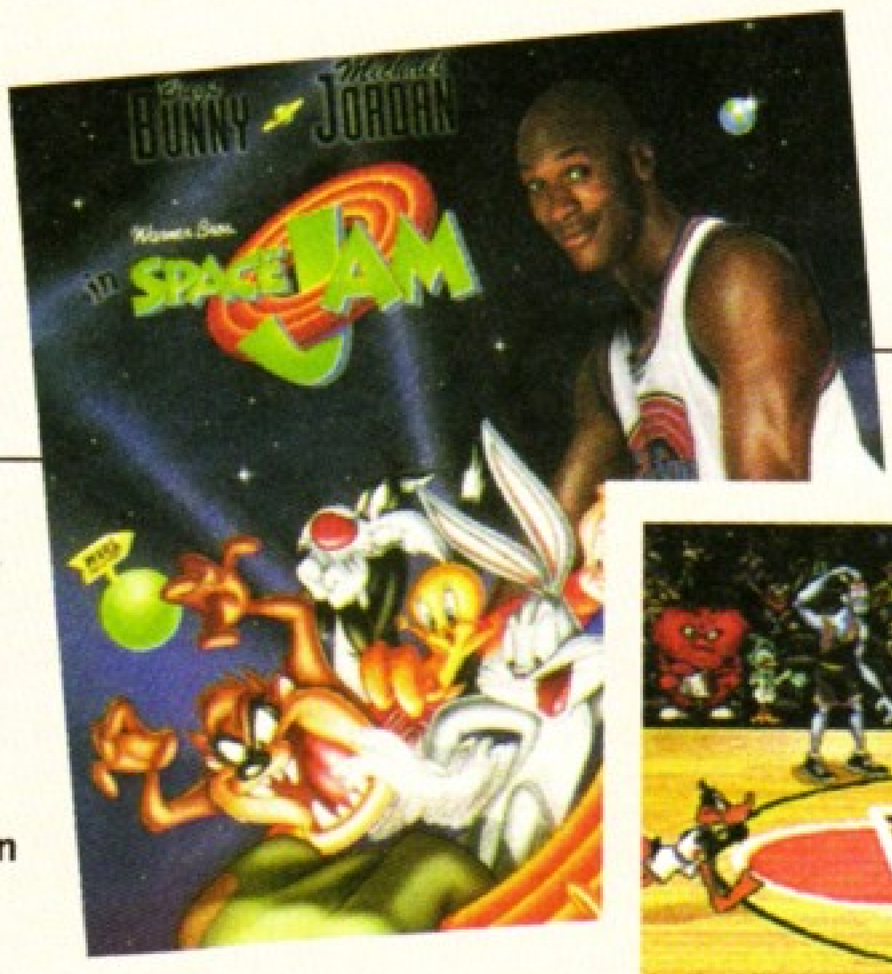






Hey! A massive improvement over the 16-bit version, isn't it!

SPACE JAM



BY ACCLAIM RELEASE TBA









Well, what else would you expect from the company that brought you the "Jam" games? Yep, Acclaim are definitely determined o make the most of this stretched-to-the-limit license, and this time they're teaming up top basketball players with Warner Brother cartoon characters to make a "wacky" basketball sim.

Actually, there's a bit more to it than that. Space Jam is also set to be one of the year's biggest movies (in the States at least), starring Magic Johnson, loads of other NBA stars and all the Looney Tune classic characters. The general theme of the film, as you would imagine, is to create the best basketball team of all time in a most hilarious manner. And as far as the game goes, it probably means that you get to do all sorts of things with the players that you can't do in real basketball – producing mallets, bashing people over the head, that sort of thing.

Anyway, although there's not much to see on this one at the moment, development is coming along at a very swift rate and should even be ready for preview next month. All being well, of course.

MK 1&2 DUO

BY ACCLAIM RELEASE TBA

MK 1



MK 2





Well, you've got to hand it to them. They sure know how to make the most out of a license. Yep, we've seen Mortal Kombats 1&2 on just about every machine known to man, but you know what? We've never seen *both of* them, together at once. Now why didn't anyone think of that before? Oh, that's exactly what Acclaim have done here in this double-the-gameplay-half-the-price package. Not at all a cash in, simply a chance for all those Saturn owners who missed out on the first two Mortal Kombats to get a look at what it was like in the old days.

With arcade-perfect graphics on both of the versions and all the secret bits and pieces included, this is sure to be a hit with all the complete die-hard MK fans out there, although others may be a bit miffed by it – especially when they can go out and buy MK3 for the same price. As Acclaim already have the rights for the first two games it shouldn't take them too long to convert the titles to Saturn, which hopefully means the double pack will be out on the shelves by the end of summer. Look out for the forthcoming review.



WATERWORLD

BY OCEAN RELEASE TBA

To most people, Waterworld is the movie known only for its over the top extravagance and budget-breaking expenditure. Oh, and for Kevin Costner's strange gill things too. But, despite being one of last year's most high profile films, the usual temptation to rush out a game-of-the-film was passed over, and Ocean, who had bought the license when the film was in development, began think about creating their own version of events.

One year later and they're still going. The original project was destined for the Megadrive, but once the Saturn was released, they decided to develop for the superior machine instead. Currently around 20% complete, the project should be finished by Autumn, and should be on the shelves in the UK by around October.

The game itself follows the Waterworld theme, with you taking charge of your very own battleship and charging around a vast expanse of water. Obviously, the main aim is to blow the hell out of everything that moves and keep your own ship out of trouble. At the moment though, it's difficult to see how this is going to work as the version we saw had no enemies programmed into it and was only running on one level. However, there should be much more progress made on this title in the very near future as now the basic engine of the game has been programmed in, it's easier to complete the rest of the levels.

Anyway, provided the gameplay is up to scratch, this should prove popular amongst shoot 'em up fans. More nearer its release in the Autumn.





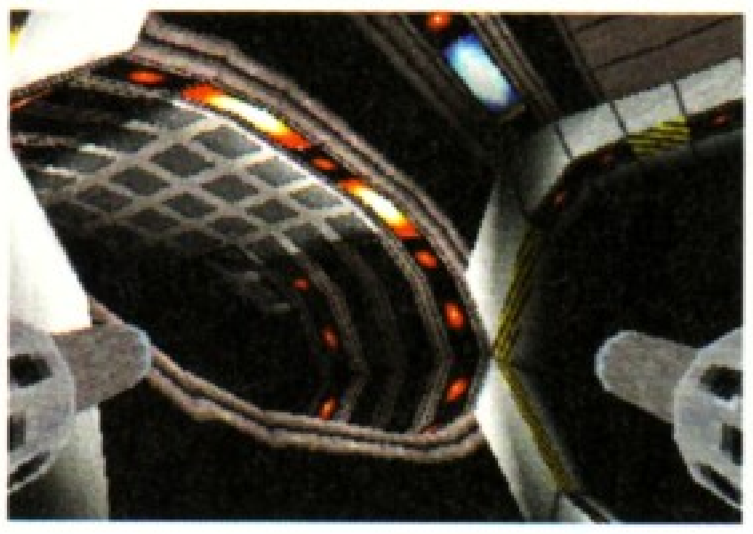


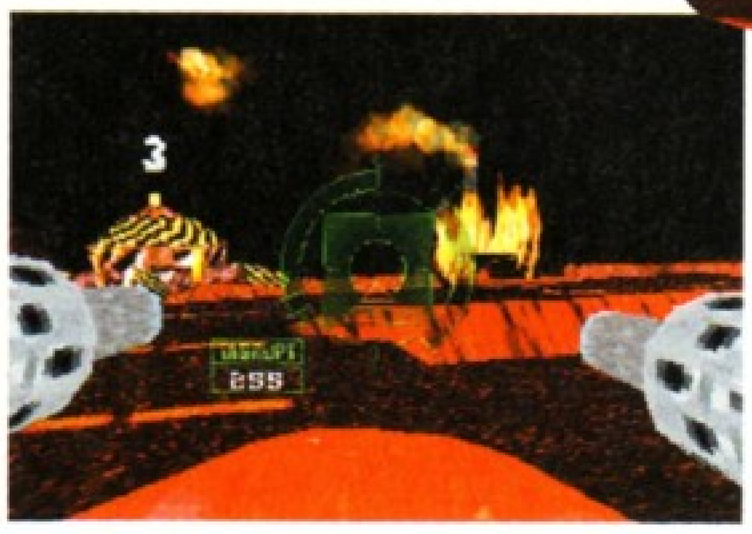
BLAM! MACHINEHEAD

Babylon's Burning! And only you can save the day!



PUBLISHER ⇩	GAME STYLE ⇩	RELEASE DATE ⇩
CORE	Shoot 'em up	September/October
ORIGIN	Original title	
ITS A BIT LIKE	Pazer Dragoon, Firestorm and Ghen War	







We previewed Blam! Machinehead a couple of months back, stupidly thinking that it would be out on the shelves a few months later. Howe stupid we were to listen to those evil programmers who always lie about when their games will be finished. If they'd been telling the truth, they would have said that for the last few months all they'd been doing was playing footie down the park, eating ice lollies and getting sunburnt. But I suppose that would have got them in trouble with their bosses.

Anyway, the point of all this is that Blam! still isn't finished and probably won't be out until around September. This means that in addition to finishing the original code, the programmers have had time to add a few little extras into the game (and, take a few out that they thought weren't working quite properly).



For anyone who didn't get to see the preview the first time around, Blam! Machine head is a 3D blaster quite similar to Panzer Dragoon 2 except that instead of riding a big scary dragon, you get to ride a bomb instead. And there's actually a good reason for this – a professor , in an attempt to save the world from a mad scientist, has created a bomb which will blow all evil mutants off the face of the earth. Unfortunately, while enlisting the help of a fellow professor, she has somehow managed to get herself strapped to her own bomb and is now whizzing about all over the place, in dire need of rescue. In fact, unless she finds the evil man behind the creation of all the mutants, the bomb will explode and the only living hope the entire Earth has will cease to exist. Bit of a scary prospect isn't it?





Anyway, as you've probably guessed by now, you take on the role of professor Kimberly Stride. She doesn't wear very many clothes for a scientist type, but she does have good intentions. Her ultimate goal is to reach and destroy the huge evil computer/human known as the machinehead. The game takes place on a much-devastated earth where huge mutant spiders roam around barren landscapes and normal human beings are very thin on the ground.

The actual gameplay, although taking a standard first-person perspective shoot 'em up view, involves quite a heavy amount of strategy. To complete each level,you'll have to fulfil very specific mission objectives, such as releasing a train from a station (you'll get to see it moving around the level) so that the power can be restored to an electricity generator. There's also keys dotted around each level, the collection of which will allow you to access new terrains. It's also essential to collect all of these if you want to get through to the next level. Although the ultimate aim is to meet Tony "Flabby" Defresco and save the world, sub missions must be completed simply so your co-professor Orville doesn't decide to detonate the bomb that you're riding on - he's a bit of a pervert you see, and after rejecting his affections he's decided that he might want to kill you instead. Nice guy, eh?



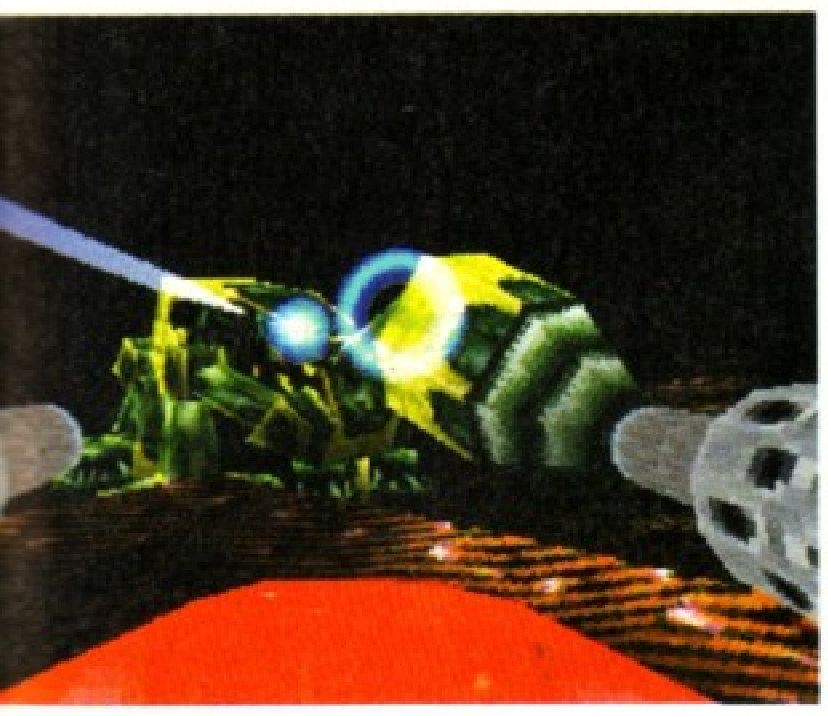


Obviously, to meet all the specific mission objectives the presence of some pretty awesome firepower will be required. Luckily, more powerful weapons can be be picked up as you progress through the levels, and even at this incomplete stage, some of the weapon effects are absolutely stunning. For instance, there's a "storm" weapon that can be picked up which produces a lightning storm and kills everything in its vicinity. The actual effects are very realistic, and really make the most of the Saturn's capabilities – there's even going to be some translucent effects in the finished version.

At the moment, there's only a couple of levels of the game that are actually playable, but Core are hoping to have the game finished within the next month or so. This should hopefully mean that we get the game in for review next month. Well, that's what they reckon anyway.



It might look like a bobsleigh but it is in fact a bomb that our heroine is regretably stuck to.









The in-game action is viewed from a first-person perspective, with your two cannon turrets clearly visible.

HE IS THE MAN...

The guy behind all the evil goings-on is one Tony "Flabby" Defresco. After working for research company Senclair for some years, he decides to use their research for his own ends. While Senclair has developed micro machines to complete everyday tasks, Defresco used them on himself, to develop his own body – in a vain attempt to attract the laydees. Unfortunately, this didn't work and the DNA began to mutate. Eventually, Tony became even more twisted and generated a virus that would wipe out everything on the planet. Except for him of course. After he let it loose, almost everything on the planet was destroyed. But Tony began to reanimate things and all the beings left on the earth began to have a huge fight, obviously making it a very dangerous place to be. As you can imagine, that's why scientist Kimberly Stride wants the carnage to stop. That's why she's built a huge bomb to, er, blow everything away.









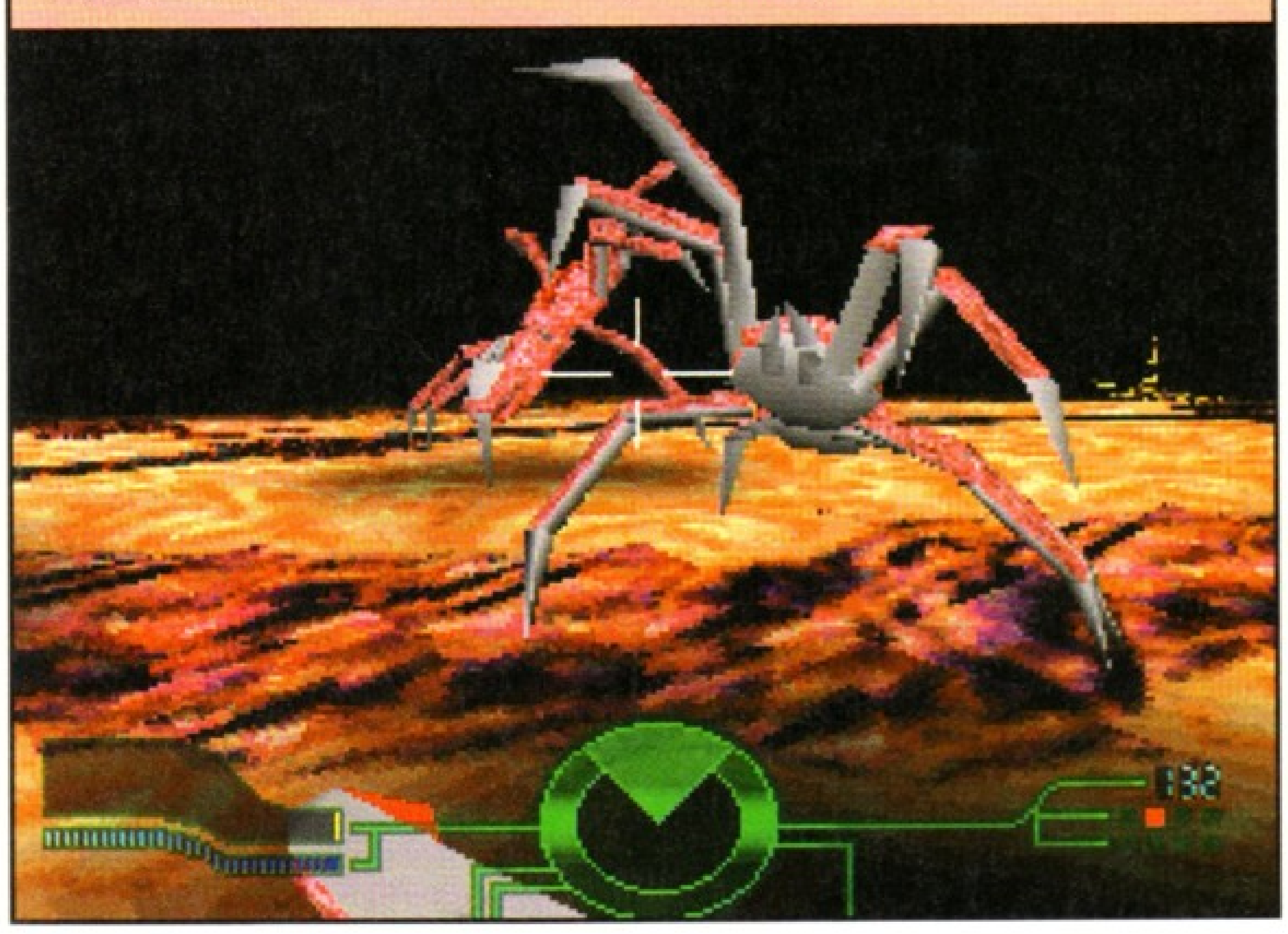


Blam! Blam! Shake, shake the...err...



LEVEL ONE MISSIONS

Remember we were saying that there's loads of different tasks to complete before each level is finished? Well, for example, in level one there's three different areas to explore, each infested with plenty of spider cocoons. In this mission, there's key puzzles to solve, trains to follow, trains to get ahead of, cannons to destroy, areas of land to rebuild, giant spider webs to dodge and a huge queen spider to annihilate. Blimey! And that's just the first level!



Whenever the world is threatened you can bet a mad scientist is involved somewhere.



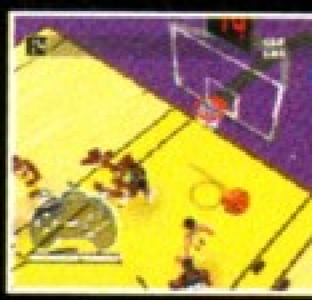


NBA ACTION

Bored with footie? Then why not dye your hair pink and play basketball instead!







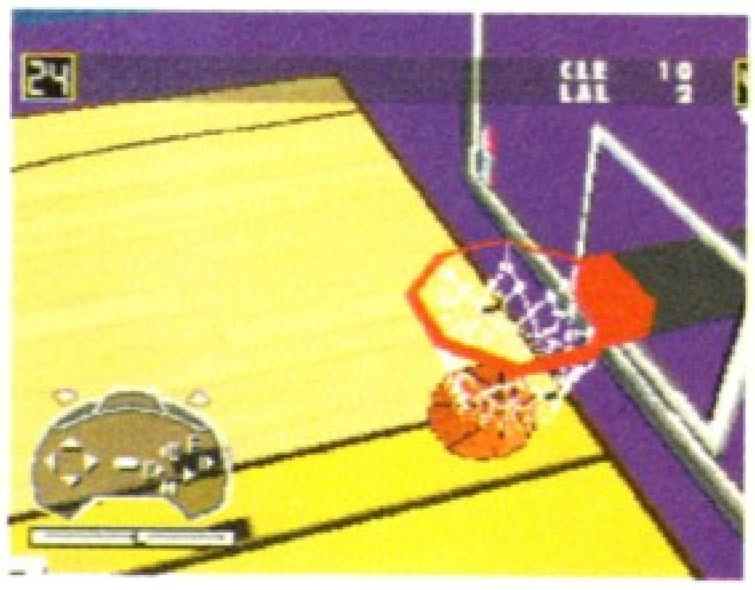
PUBLISHER	GAME STYLE	RELEASE DATE
SEGA	Sports	August
ORIGIN	Original title	
ITS A BIT LIKE	NBA Jam, NBA Jam TE, Slam and Jam	

Despite a pretty low profile, Basketball is becoming increasingly popular in the UK. It's going to take us a while before we get anywhere near the standards of all the US shenanigans seen on TV, but hey, when thou art crap at sport, taketh part in exercise of the videogame kind! You can always pretend that you're just learning the rules.

Actually, there's already been a fair few basketball offerings on the Saturn, and one in particular, NBA Jam Tournament Edition was just about as good as it gets on console. But luckily, if you're into basketball, then this summer is going to be absolutely great for you, because there's loads more basketball sims on the way. However, there's never been one developed by Sega before now, has there?

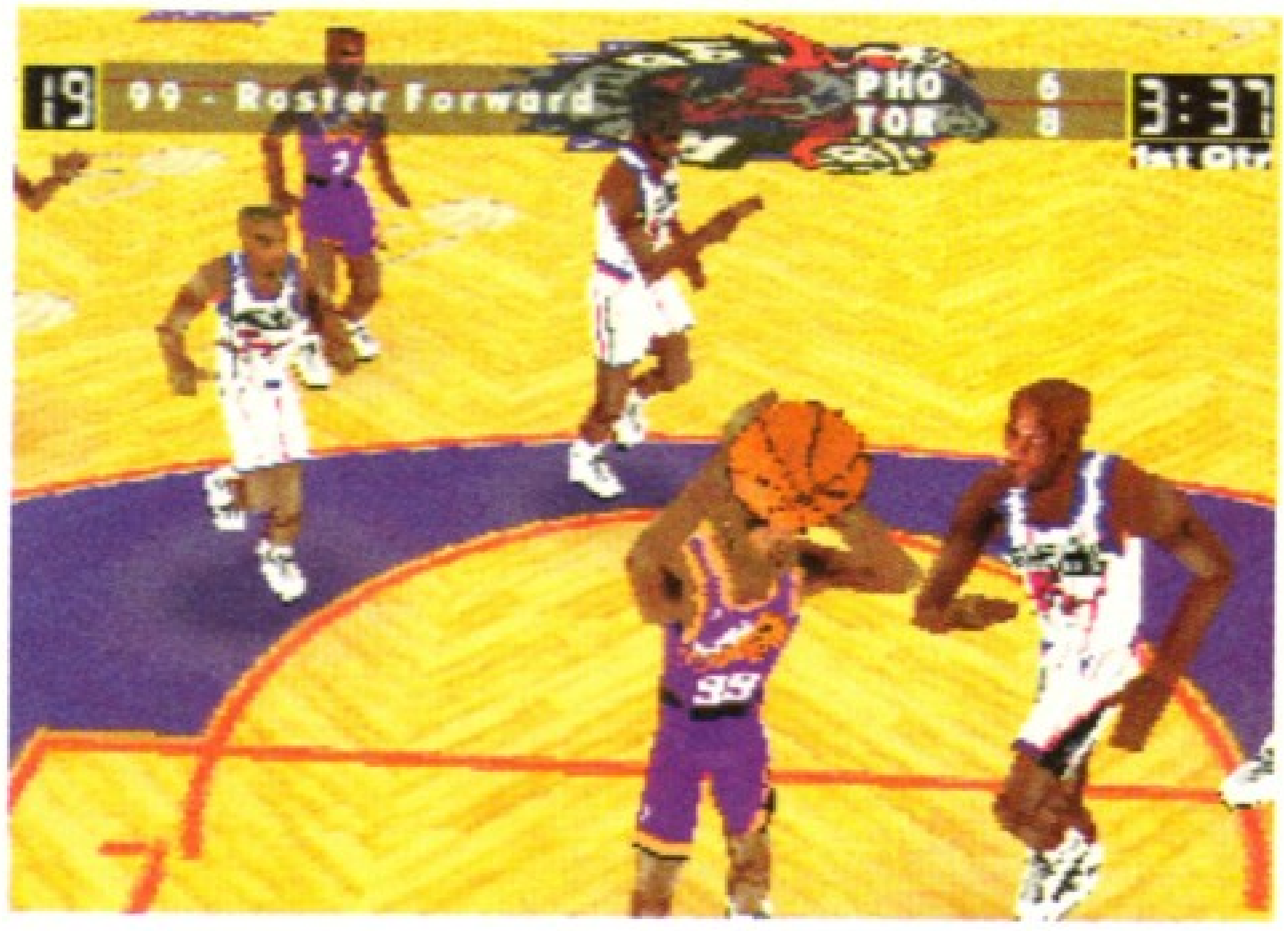
> "...this is a way more realistic interpretation of basketball than say, NBA Jam or NBA Jam Tournament Edition..."

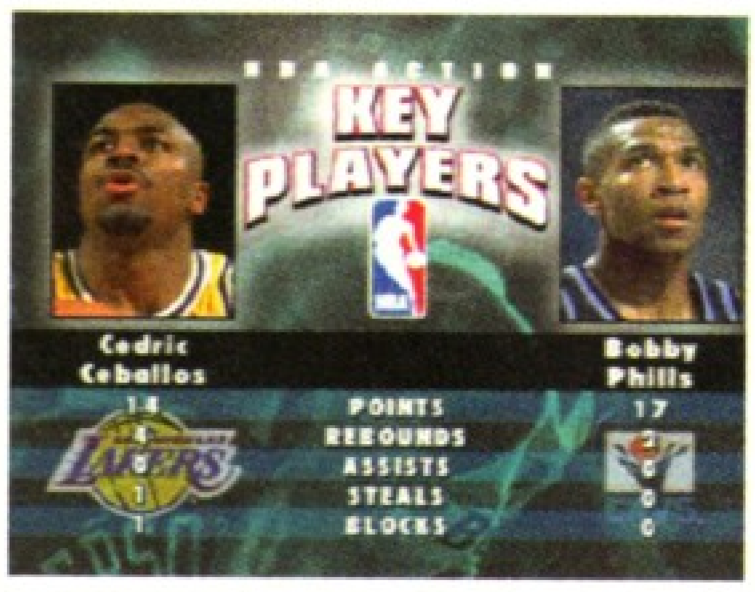






This might look a bit complicated, but all its showing is the path that the ball took.

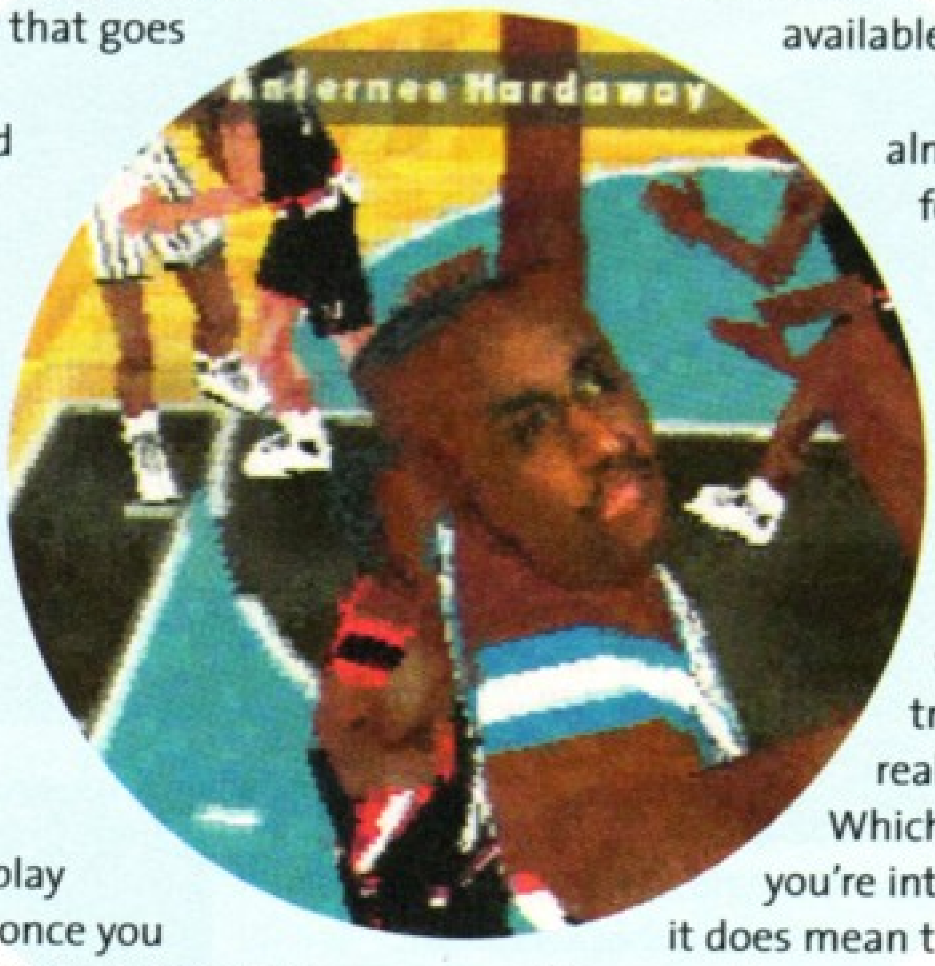




Look! These are the actual players from real basketball. With their own real names!

Ahahaha. Well, not on Saturn anyway. Until now, obviously.

Sega's first Saturn basketball effort is a rather fancy little number that goes by the name of NBA Action. Featuring all the players and teams from the real NBA tournaments, apparently it will make you "Feel the rush as the gameplay will bring you into the surreal word of the NBA". Crikey. NBA Jam TE certainly wasn't anything like that. Plus, as well as all the right teams and everything, certain players have their own signature moves, which can make for some spectacular play once you learn how to pull the moves off. Also, the game is quite unique in that the players' attributes change as the game is being played – depending on the player's performance. This means that if you begin with the best team but lose every game, your players' statistics may drop as the games progress. Which obviously makes this more realistic than other basketball sims available.



The version shown here is almost 100% complete, with very few changes to be made before it actually goes on sale. And, on a first playtest, it does seem to play very smoothly, although it has to be said that this is a way more realistic representation of basketball than say, NBA Jam. You'll see none of the "big head" trickery here – it's just 100% realism all the way down the line. Which is probably loads better if you're into basketball in real life, even if it does mean that there's a little less sheen to the proceedings.

As NBA Action is practically finished, it's likely that it will make it out on to the shelves by the end of August. Which is just about the same time that BMG will have their own version of events, Slam and Jam (reviewed this issue) in the shops. Which one will take the majority of the basketball fans' cashola remains to be seen, but our money's on this one. Look out for the review next month!







As you can see, it's complete realism all the way.

BASKETBALL'S BIG FOUR

There's plenty of basketball games on the way this year, so which one do you choose if you're into the game? Well, before you make any purchasing decisions, consider the choices.

NBA ACTION: Speaks for itself really, doesn't it. After all, we have dedicated two whole pages to the game. As its main aim is to go for realism, NBA Action doesn't have all the arcadey bits found in games such ass NBA TE, but it's still pretty fast-paced and has the added bonus of being released under the Sega Sports label.

SLAM 'N' JAM: BMG's offering is reviewed in his very issue on page 78. It's more arcadey in style, but the gameplay is a bit thin in places and overall it may be a bit disjointed. However, if you're not too fussed about the finer points of basketball and just want to play a game, then this could be the one for you.

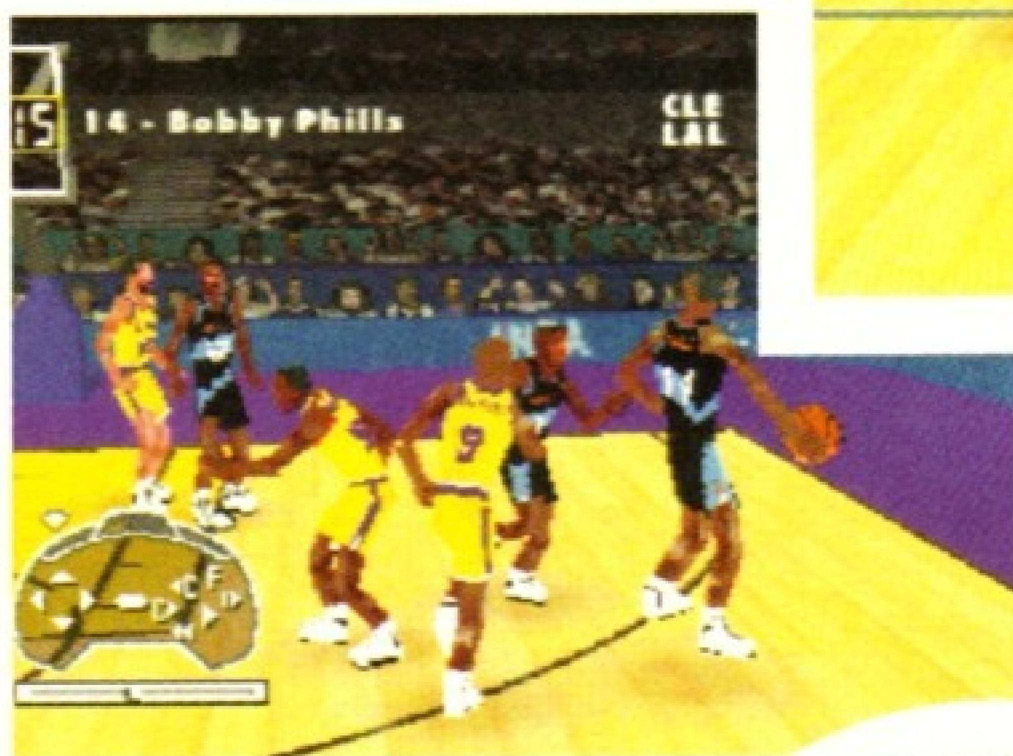
SPACE JAM: One for people who aren't bothered about basketball at all and want to play something that's good fun. And let's face it, with characters such as Bugs Bunny heading the teams, you couldn't really expect this to be anything but a humorous take on the game. We've played an early version of the title and so far, it's' looking pretty good – a bit like NBA Jam TE but with funnier graphics.

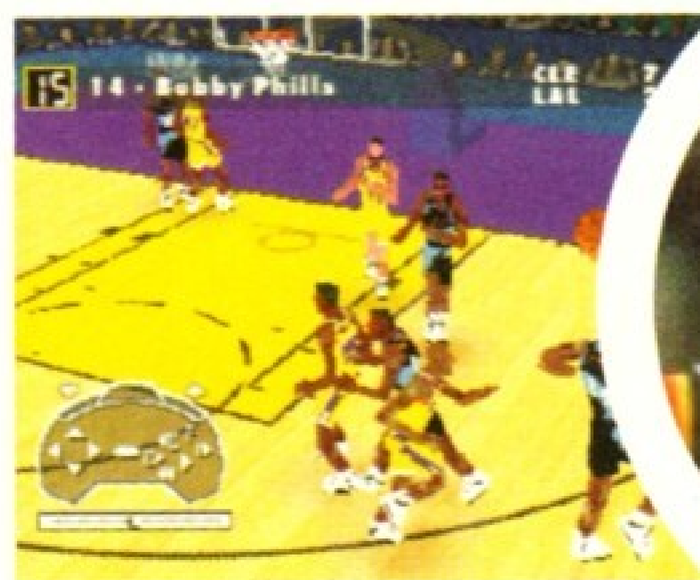
NBA JAM EXTREME: Without a doubt, the favourite of the three, although there's still nothing to be seen on the game yet. Obviously it's going to be arcade perfect, but it will also include a variety of new camera angles and souped up graphics. Easily the most popular game of its type in the arcade, this is bound to be a massive hit when it's released on Saturn sometime in late Autumn.

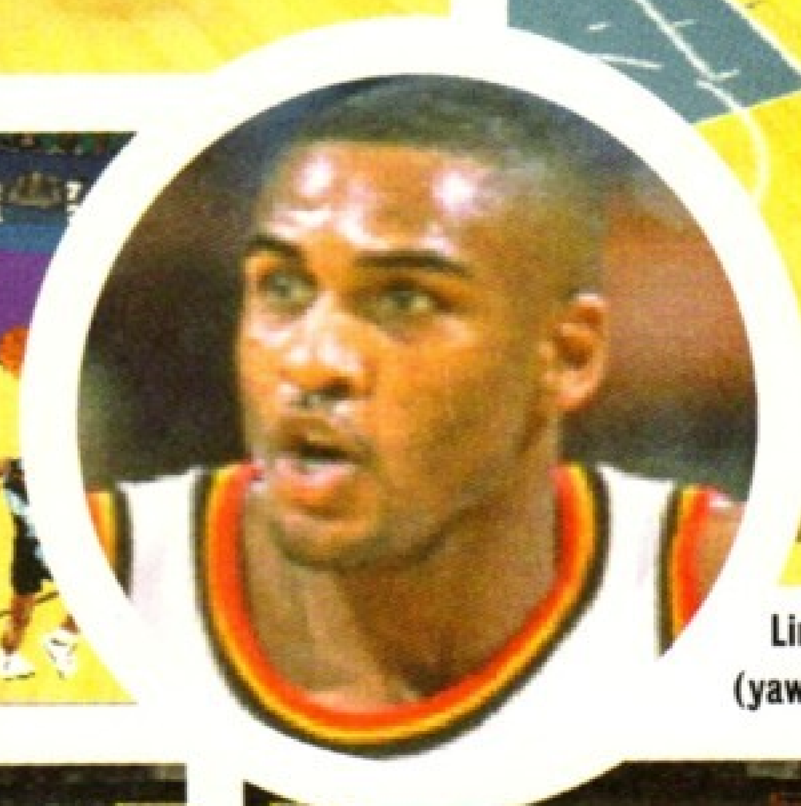


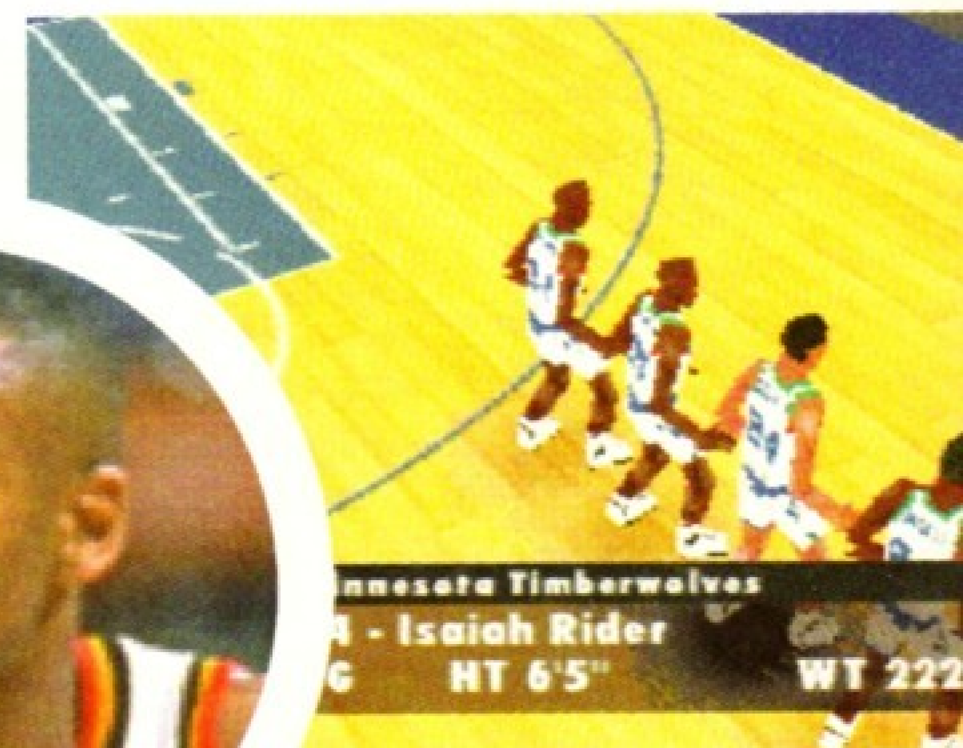


All the players look on in awe as this very tall man shoots a basket.





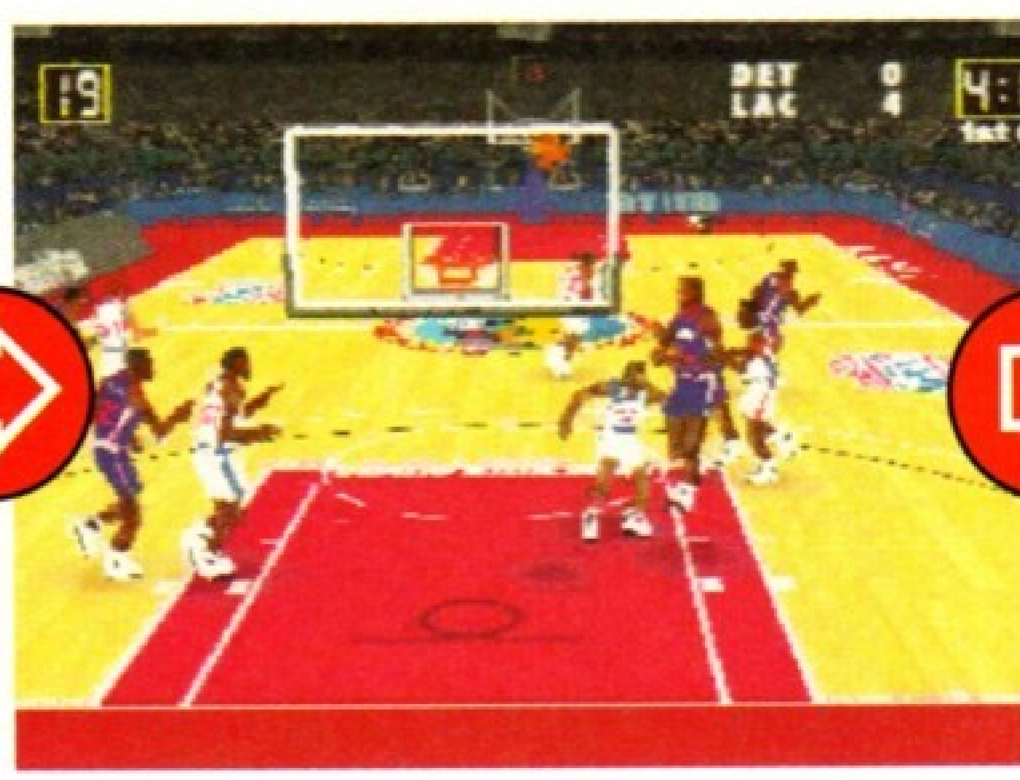




Line dancing is part of the fun (yawn).



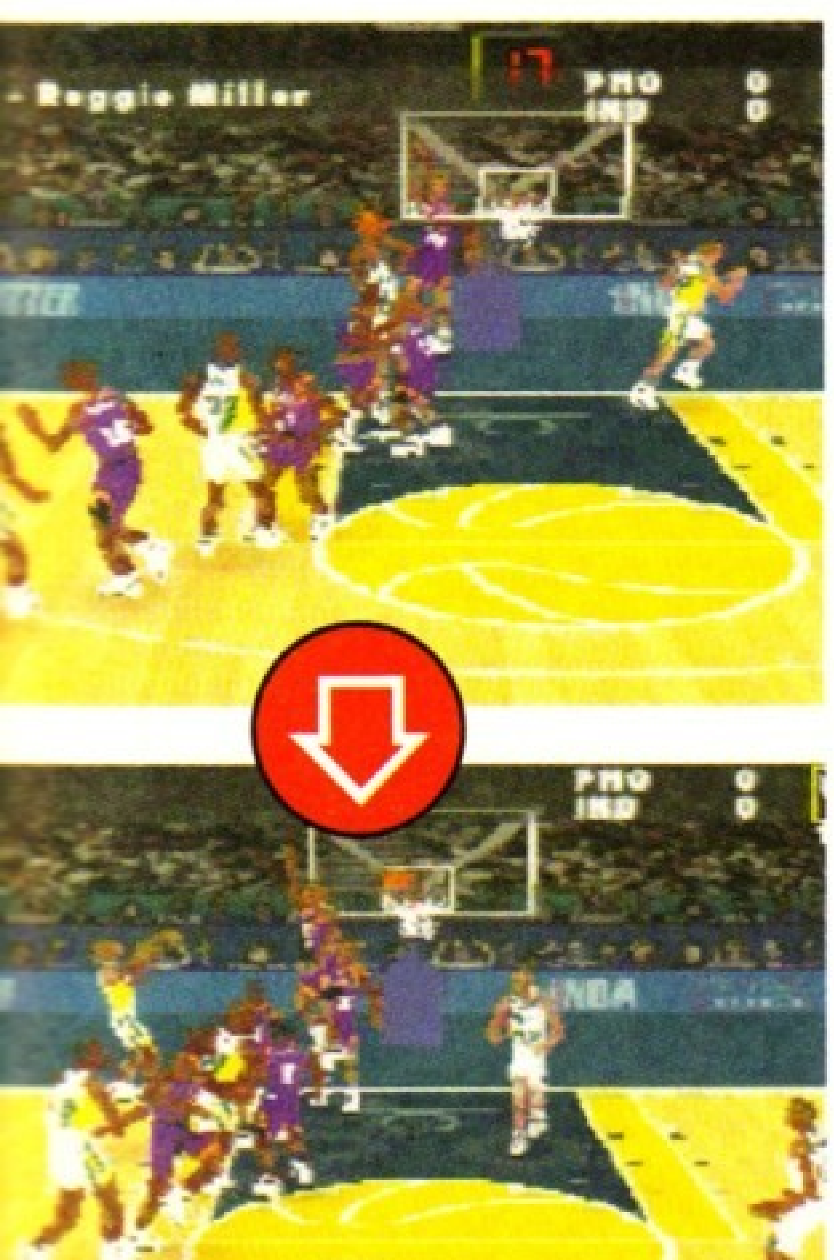
...he makes it through the defenders, and makes an attempt on the "hole"...



...Is it going in or not? A very tense moment for all the players involved...



...It's in! What a hero. You gotta hand it to the lad, They should give him a medal or something.

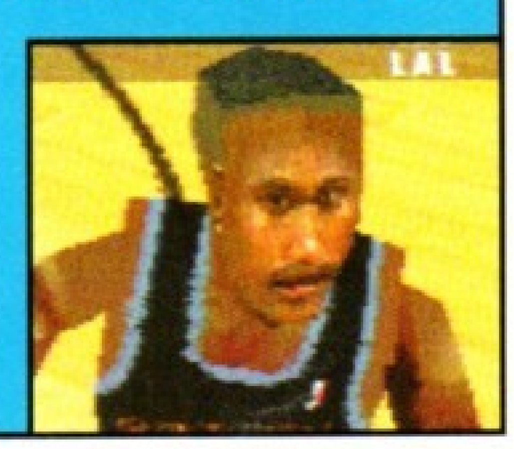




There's loads of different angles to view the action from – some of them are pretty realistic. Like this one. However, you can't chop and change them at random (well, not when they're shooting),

HE BECOMES REAL BEFORE YOUR VERY EYES!

The problem with basketball sims is that despite having all the real players along with their stats and everything, they don't actually look much like their real-life counterparts. But, that's all set to change in NBA Action. Each player has their real face digitised and when the game's intro runs, the camera zooms in on the computerised player to reveal the real-life players face. So you'll know exactly who the person is – quite handy if you fancy matching them up with the players on the telly.



CHAOS CONTROL

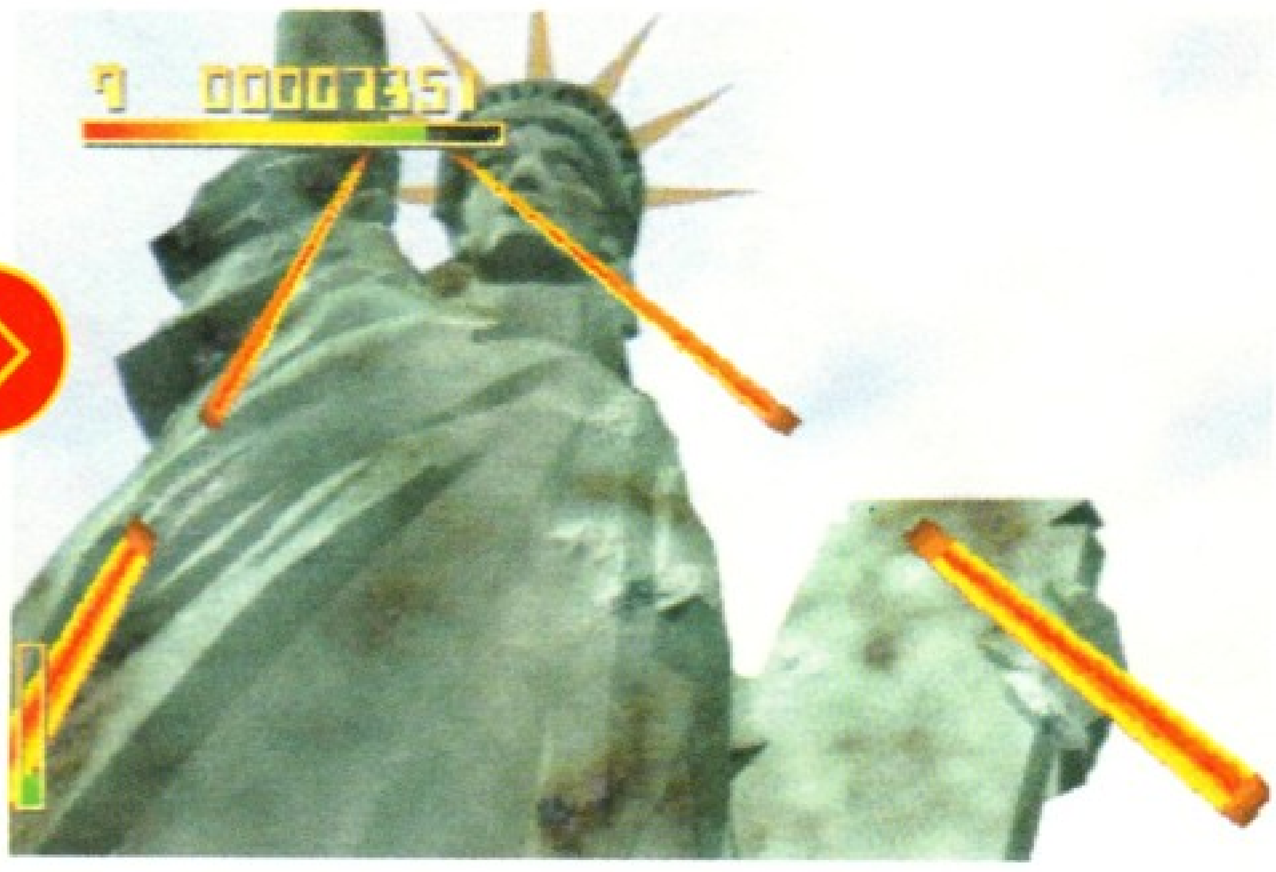
Help! The Martians are on to us! They're going to attack!



PUBLISHER	GAME STYLE	RELEASE DATE
INFOGRAMES	Shoot 'em up	September
ORIGIN	Original title	
ITS A BIT LIKE	Virua Cop mixed with Starfighter 3000	





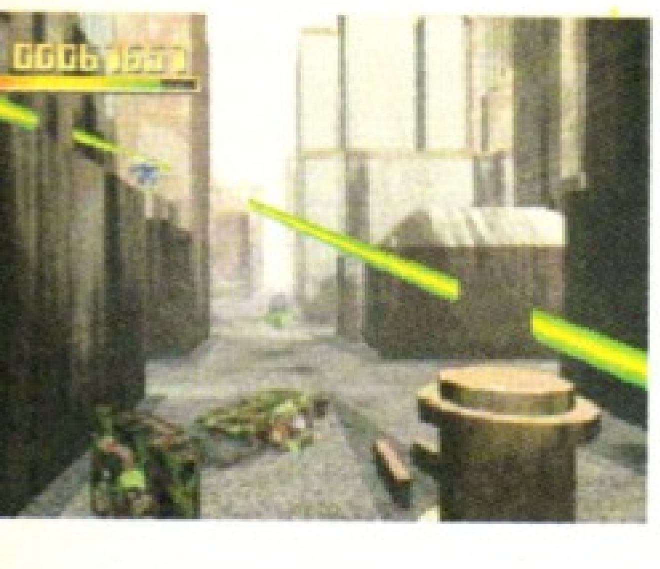


The year is 2071, and interplanetary forces are at war. And this isn't some minor disagreement type of war. Nope, this is fully-blown, destroy the entire planet kind of war. Some planets have already had their entire populations wiped out – for instance, Pluto and Mars, once supporting thriving communities are now almost completely barren. All the people have been wiped out, and the one lone survivor has fled in search of safety. That person is Jessica Darkhill, and it's up to you to help her out. As First Lieutenant of the Ares Interception squad, she was there to see all

> **"...this isn't some minor disagreement type of war. Nope, this is a fully blown, destroy the entire planet kind of war. Some planets have already had their entire populations wiped out..."**

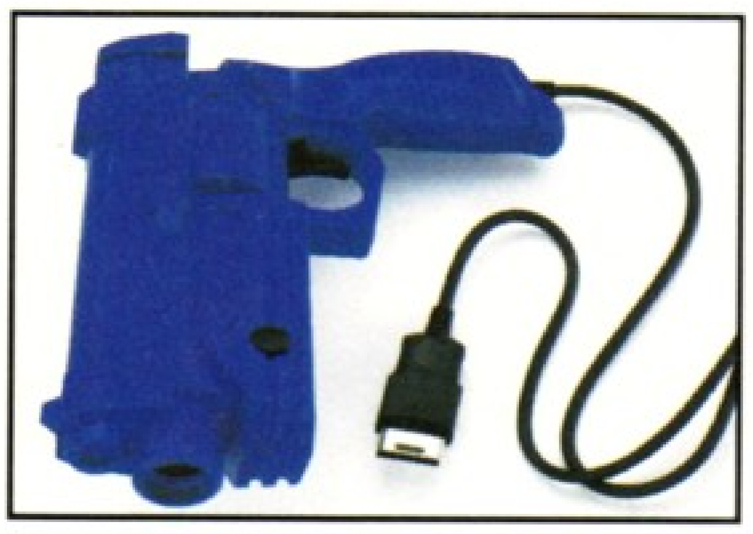
of the action that took place in the war on Mars and amazingly, she survived and escaped to the nearest Lunar Base. However, rather than being let off lightly, she's ben signed up for the next conflict, along with the 11th Squadron of the silver dragons. And, the likelihood is that this will be the last conflict ever – the Kresh Rhan armada has returned to the mother ship for refuelling and is about to launch an attack on what's left of the universe.

Luckily for you, your first mission is here on Earth, where you must free the streets of Manhattan from alien attack. Then it's out into orbit where you'll face the enemy in full as they prepare to take over the inter-universal defence system. The only way to stop these ruthless enemies is to hunt them down, one by one and finally come face to face with the grand commander.



As you've probably gathered from this ruthless storyline, Chaos Control is a pure shoot 'em up, with a first person perspective, explosions galore and a vast array of weaponry. However, the most appealing feature to the title is that it uses the Virtua Guns – in fact it's the first title that utilises the guns since Sega's own Virtua Cop! This alone should ensure it proves popular with shoot 'em up fans, although we'll be reserving our judgement on the title until next month, when we'll be receiving the final version of the game. Catch our review then!





Hey there! It's the Virtua Cop gun – and you can use it in Chaos Control as well.



This is one of the interesting life froms you'll meet...and kill!








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KEIO FLYING SQUADRON



Cute bunny girls flying across a war-torn Japan? Yoiks! It's Keio Flying Squadron!

PUBLISHER	GAME STYLE	RELEASE DATE
JVC	Shoot 'em up	September/October
ORIGIN	KEIO FLYING SQUADRON ON THE MEGA-CD	
ITS A BIT LIKE	IT'S NOT REALLY LIKE ANYTHING ELSE ON SATURN	







This is one of the easier levels in the title. And just like in real life, you only get one go at things.

Videogames by their very nature are always a bit bizarre. Who remembers Dynamite Heady on the Megadrive – a little animal thing who could dislocate his head and chuck it at enemies? And what about NiGHTS? He's a creature with the ability to fight nightmares on behalf of little children. Now, there's no denying that's pretty strange. Oh, and don't forget all those dodgy Japanese Mah Jong games. But we're not even going to talk about them because they're rude.

> **"All of these elements combine to make this a compelling title that has the most fun Japanese graphics we've seen all year."**

However, despite the tendency to always err on the surreal side, once in a while there's a videogame that is sooo weird we don't know quite what to make of it. Keio Squadron is a bit like that. Although it's essentially a platform game, and an easy one at that, there's load of very, very bizarre elements throughout the game. But I suppose that's because this is a game based on a feudal time in Japan (the Edo period), only the designers have gone a bit mad, painted the backgrounds in acid wash colours and made all the monsters really, really big. Kind of like Alice in Wonderland. And who's the hero in this adventure? Well it's a little girl dressed in a rabbit costume who fights the enemy with the aid of her pink polka dot umbrella. Who else?







Anyway, if you're a bit of a Sega loyalist,you may remember Keio from when it was released on the Mega-CD around three years ago. In fact, the 16-bit version was surprisingly similar in concept with the action alternating between platform levels and side scrolling shoot 'em up bits. The graphics, while similar in character and style are much improved over the 16-bit version with intricate backgrounds and huge, huge bosses. In fact, the bosses in Keio are probably the best thing in the whole game – there's gigantic sumo wrestlers, psychedelic tea servers, even huge crab monsters! And while they're not exactly difficult to defeat, it's still really really good fun. This is also thanks in no small way to Rani's vast array of weaponry – from little pink umbrellas to oversized mallets that she whips out and bashes enemies over the head with. Incidentally, when she does this, her expression changes from butter-wouldn't-melt to something akin to Minnie the Minx. All of these elements combine to make this a compelling, if a little simple title that has the most fun Japanese graphics we've seen all year.

If you're the sort of person that gets fed up with standard platform action after a while, you needn't worry too much, because there's flying levels to this game too. In addition to fighting the evil army that's attempting to invade Japan, Rani also has a pet dragon, Spot to help her through the airborne levels. Spot can breathe fire and launch missiles and is actually pretty handy in the destruction department. Which incidentally, is just as well when you're up against the likes of space bears and stranded Russian astronauts.

The version of Keio that we've played is basically complete and all being well, the title will be on the shelves by mid-August. As well as pleasing platform fans, should attract anyone who's even the slightest bit interested in pure Japanese games. Oh, and anyone who's mad will like it too.

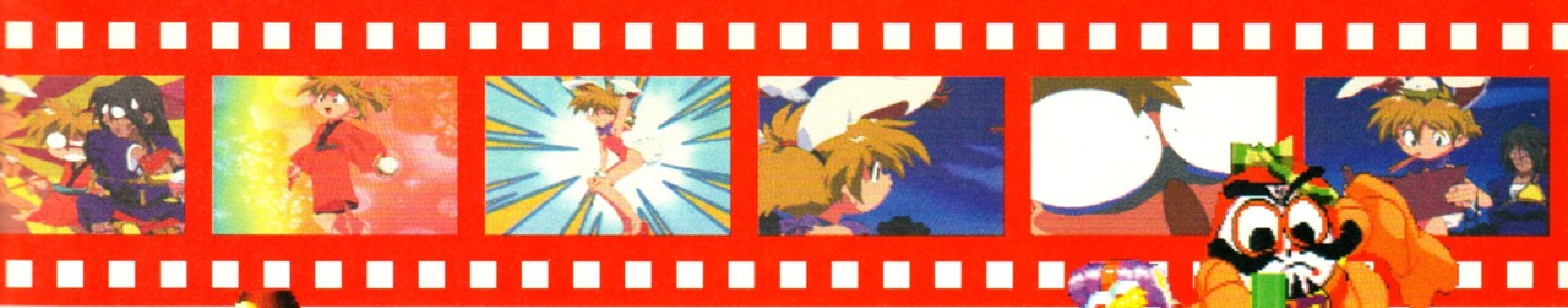


The sharks (below) will attempt to take bites out of you as you fly through this level. Stay close to the top of the screen.



FLY, LITTLE ONE!

Here's one of the flying levels. While they're not exactly the most challenging levels in the game, they're very cute and cuddly. Plus you get to shoot things like flying teddy bears and strange little beasties that really have no business being either in the air or in outer space. It's all a bit weird really. But it is dead, dead good.





There's loads of these golden bunnies strewn all around the levels. You can collect them, although we're not sure what they're for.

MONSTER MASH



Some of the bosses in Keio Flying Squadron are just plain weird. For instance, on this level, you bump into a couple of sumo wrestlers, just as they're about to have a big fight. Now, we're not sure whether they're relieved or upset that you disturbed them, but one of them promptly turns into a raging spinning top and tries to stamp on your head. Poking him with an umbrella seems to do the trick for a while, but after a couple of prods, he then turns into one of those things that you put on the end of a pencil and spins all around the level. Why he does this is anyone's guess. I suppose he must be pretty mad, after all. Or maybe he's possessed by the devil.



Look at me! I'm completely normal!

Now watch me turn into a strange monster!



These little fellas give you a helping hand by allowing you to jump on their heads, therefore allowing you to reach the golden bunnies.





Another of the game's weird bosses – this time it's a strange cat.

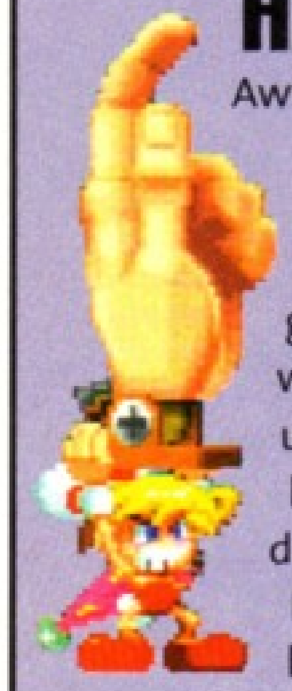


It's a runaway ghost train! One of the easiest parts of this level.





HARI RANI



Aww. Look at little Rani. Doesn't she look cute? well, that's because she is really cute. But get her angry and you'll wish you'd never been born. you see, when she gets angry, she turns into a completely different person. Just like the incredible hulk. Her face goes all scrunched up and she gets really really mean. And that's when she starts to get her weapons out. She can use her little umbrella to smack enemies over the head, her mallet to, er, smack her enemies over the head and her little bow and arrow to shoot darts into the enemy. The umbrella also has another use – it shields Rani from overhead missiles and also gives her a parachute-like landing when she's airborne.

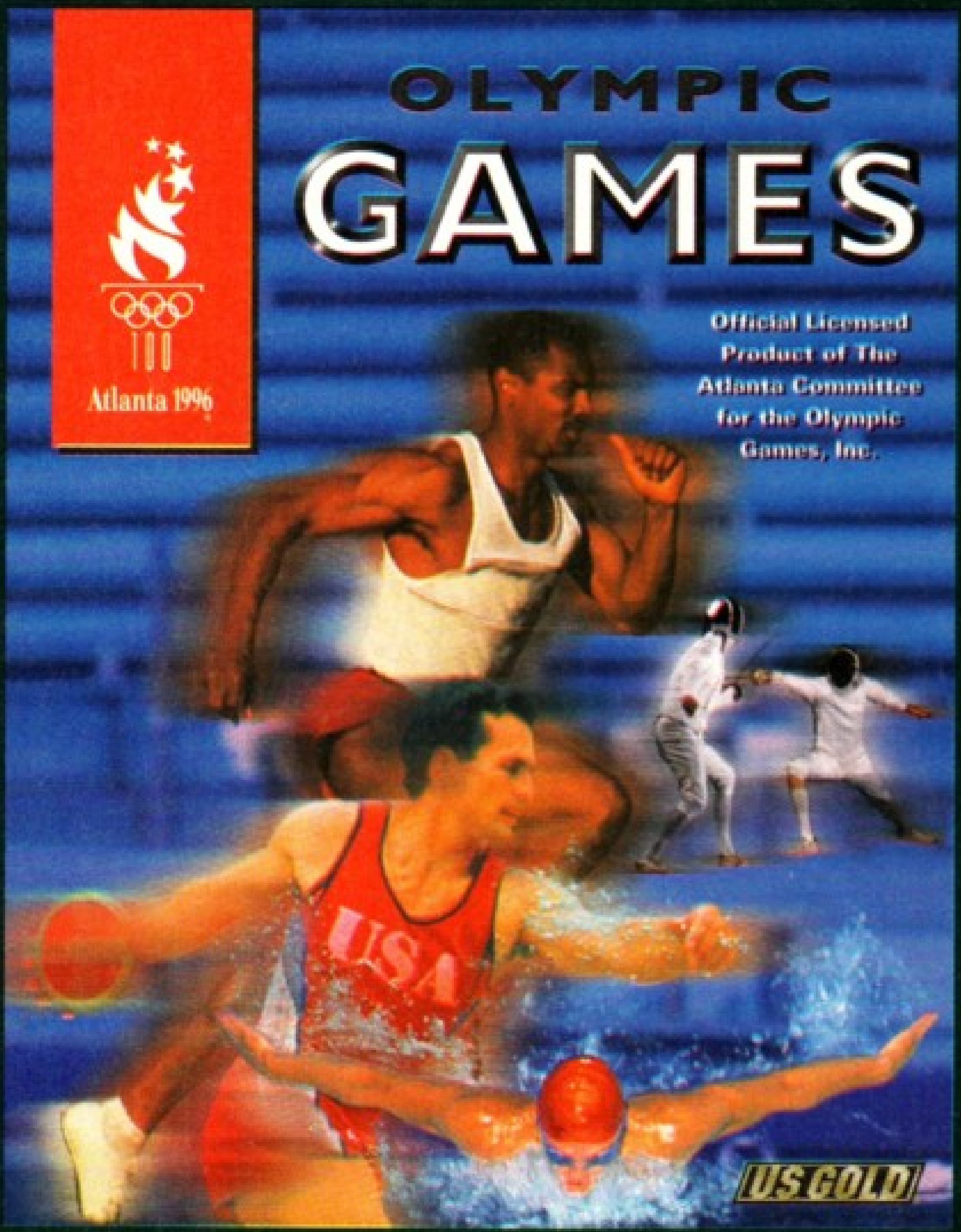
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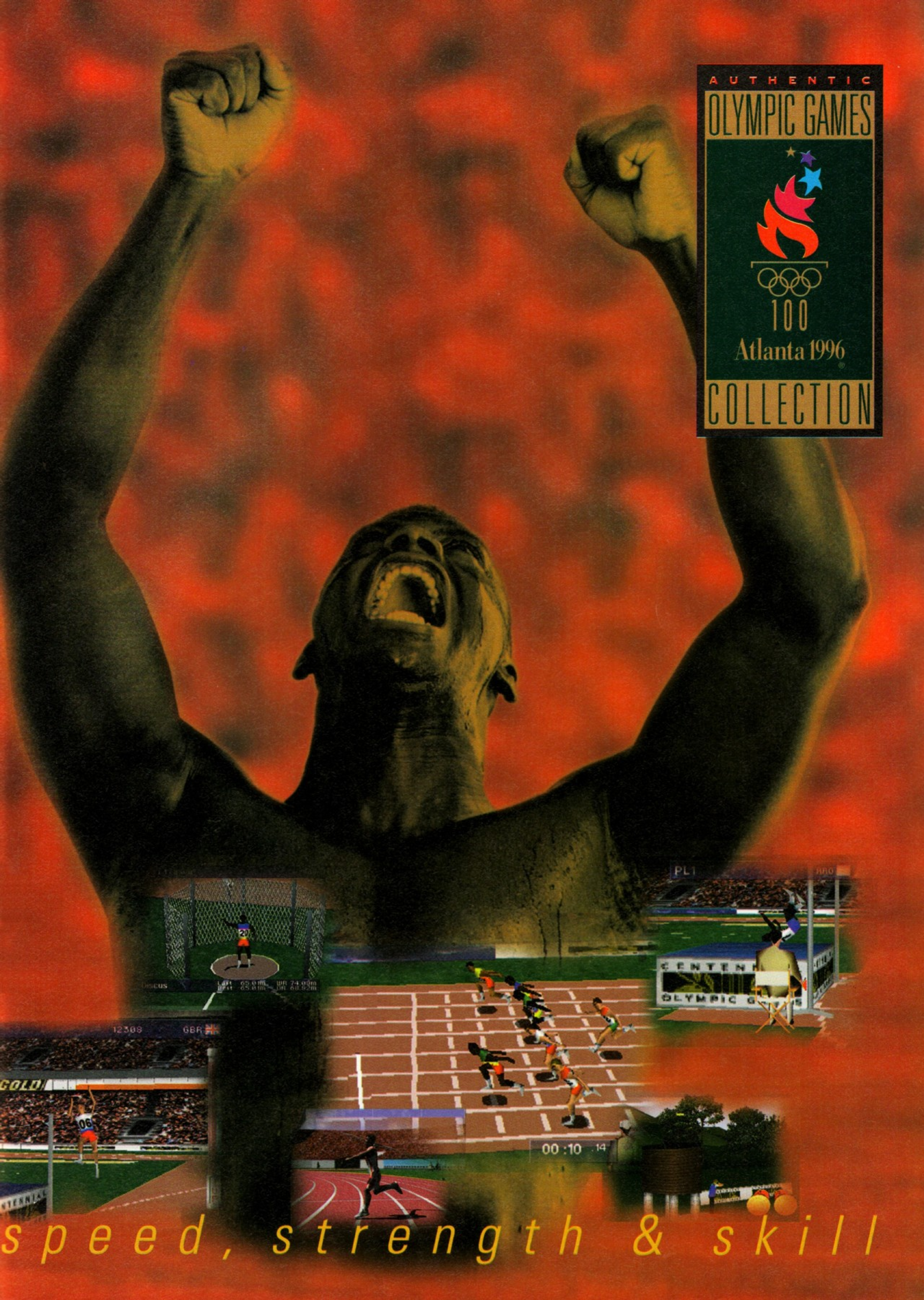
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THREE DIRTY DWARVES

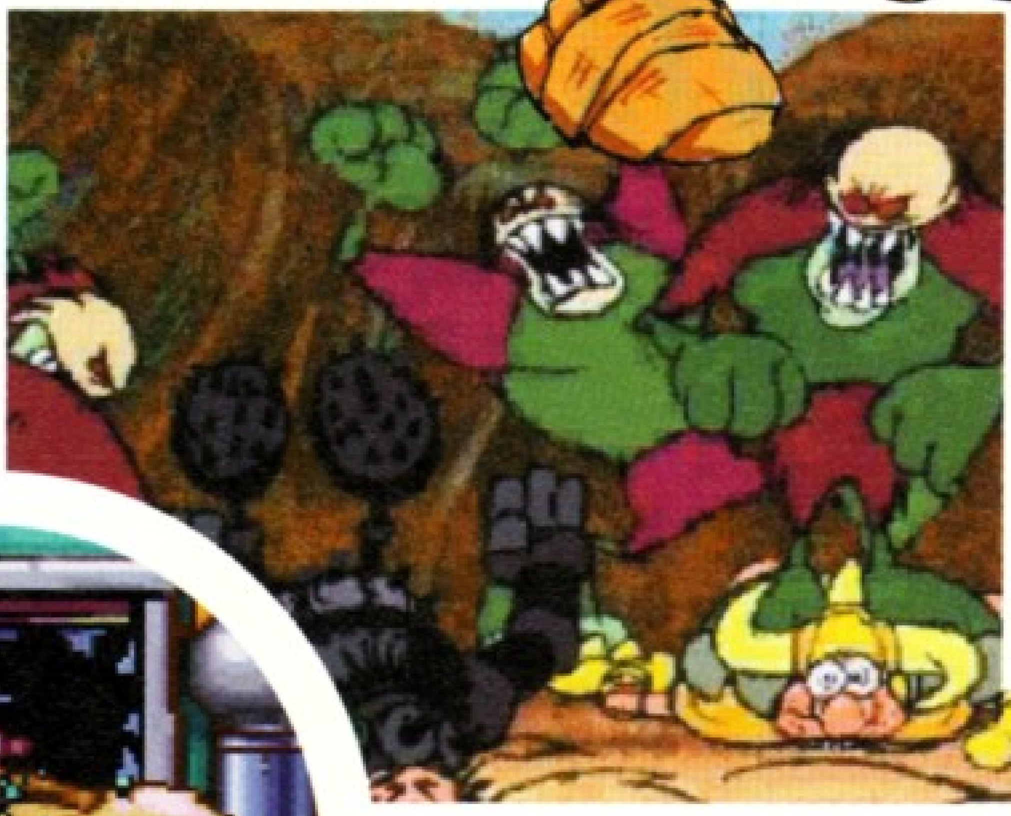
These guys will have Snow White turning in her grave!





PUBLISHER	GAME STYLE	RELEASE DATE
SEGA	Beat 'em up	September/October
ORIGIN	Original title	
ITS A BIT LIKE	Streets of Rage, but with more to do.	

Well, full marks to Sega of America for the imaginative title of this beat 'em up offering. It's not something you're going to forget in a hurry, that's for sure. But despite conjuring up visions of yellowed old men in long raincoats, Three Dirty Dwarves is about as kiddie-friendly as it gets. Well, if you call imprisoning young children and forcing them to design super-advanced weaponry kiddie friendly.





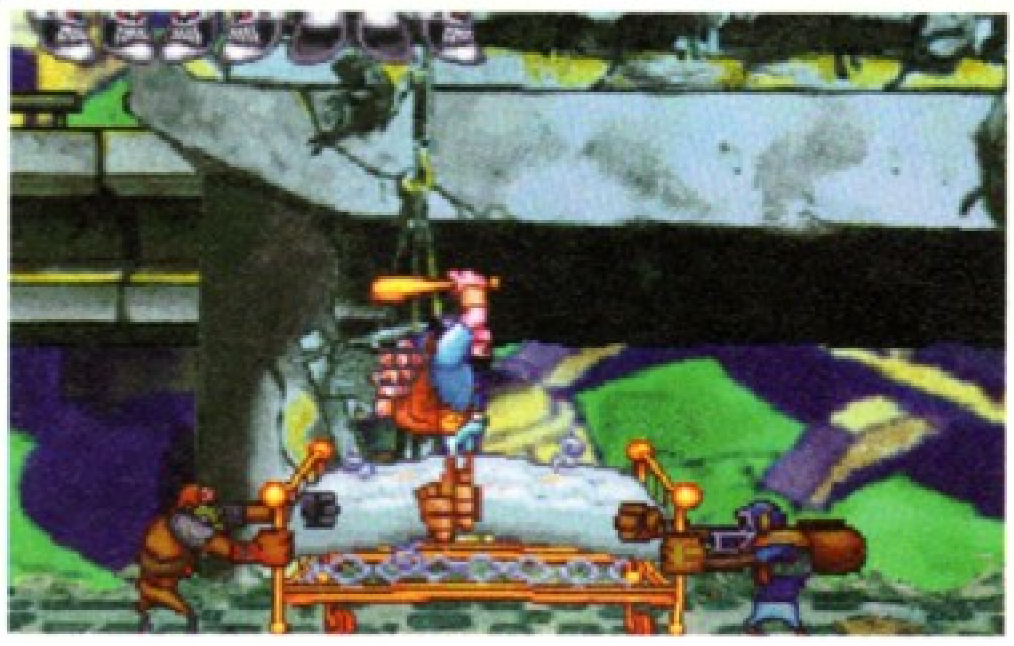
You see, that's what Three Dirty Dwarves is all about – the plight of the high-spirited, fun loving kids as they battle against the system. After being imprisoned for most of their little lives in a security complex, four highly intelligent kidlets have created their won alter-reality by ignoring their real environment and playing dungeons and dragons instead. Little do they know that in a far off dimension their every die-roll changes the real lives of the three dwarf characters they have selected. When they roll a 20, an inter-dimensional portal opens up and every single character from their adventure falls through it, bound for an earth city. And where do they end up? Why in New York of course.

As you can imagine, it's not everyday that the average New Yorker gets to see dwarves and trolls , but when the three dwarves join up to destroy all the nasty orks, they quickly become national heroes. But instead of being all happy and jolly they're very stern lipped about the whole situation because what they really want to do is get back to their home planet and blow up a few wizards. Or, get jobs creating nuclear bombs for corrupt heads of state. But to do that they're going to have to track down those pesky kids and get them to play another D&D adventure which will hopefully change their fate. And, if they find the kids, there's a good chance that they'll be set free to play in the fields and skip in the streets just like all other good kids do.

So, it's a very complicated storyline, just like all the best D&D games. But despite being based on the Dungeons and Dragons RPG, Segasoft haven't plumped for the usual wanderabout adventure incorporating loads of text *et al.* Instead, they've chosen a side scrolling beat 'em up, similar to Streets of Rage (in parts). Each of the three dwarves has a different array of moves to inflict upon the enemy, ranging from slinging baseballs to hurling bowling balls. Strange weapons for Dwarves, but then they are from a different dimension.

The gameplay is split up into a variety of short levels, with the basic goal being to beat up just about everything on the screen. There's a massive array of enemies to defeat in the game, ranging from onion breath-breathing orcs to mutant rats. Also, when the dwarves get damaged, or indeed when the dwarves damage a mutant, a still screen appears somewhere on the screen displaying the amount of damage you've caused to an opponent. This happens on all the levels apart from the boss levels where there is much more movement around the screen.

We had a quick play of this title at the E3 show, and while it's not quite up there with some of the top titles that are currently wowing Saturn skeptics, it's pretty light hearted and certainly plays well.Luckily, it's almost finished too, so you can expect to see a review in our next issue.



Go on lads! Put the boot in! After all, it's only a game! Kick harder!





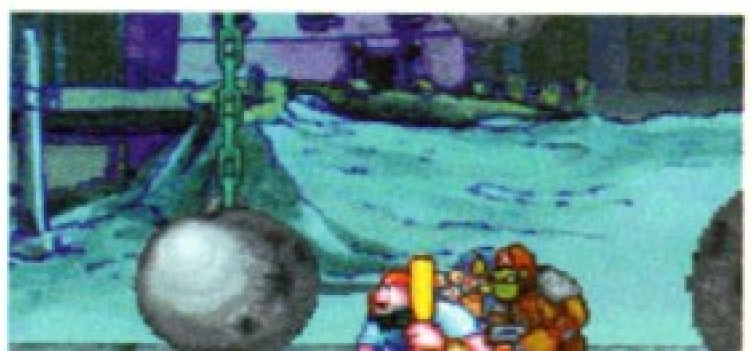


Skate in and out of the traffic!





This is one of the side-scrolling levels of the game. It's quite good fun, too!





THREE DIRTY BOYS

These are the imprisoned boys (plus a friendly referee) responsible for the chaos that is currently tearing through New York. They've got themselves into a whole lot of trouble by playing an innocent Role Playing game. Little do they know that with every roll of the die, they are changing events in a parallel dimension. When they play their final game in the adventure, they manage to release three dwarves and a vast number of trolls through an interdimensional port and on to another planet. In a bitter twist of fate, they themselves are moved from a medium risk security enclosure to a high risk one, giving them less freedom than ever before. As a result of their gaming, bizarre aliens are now wandering around the streets of NYC, wreaking havoc wherever they go.



















Well, would you believe it! It's a take on the "classic" mine cart level! How funny!

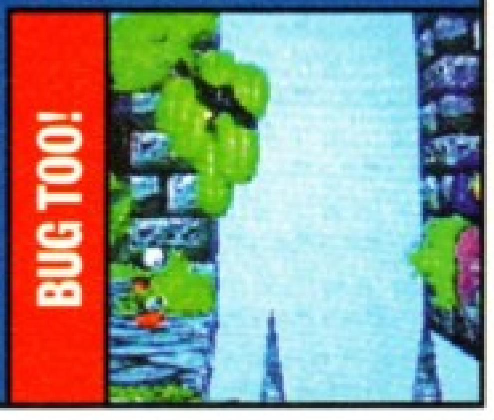


THERE'S MORE!

Three Dirty Dwarves was created by Segasoft, the same company responsible for Bug Too! They release all of their titles on the Saturn (and some on PC) and have a whole bunch of releases lined up for this year. Forthcoming games include: Mr Bones, Sacred Pools and Bug Too!

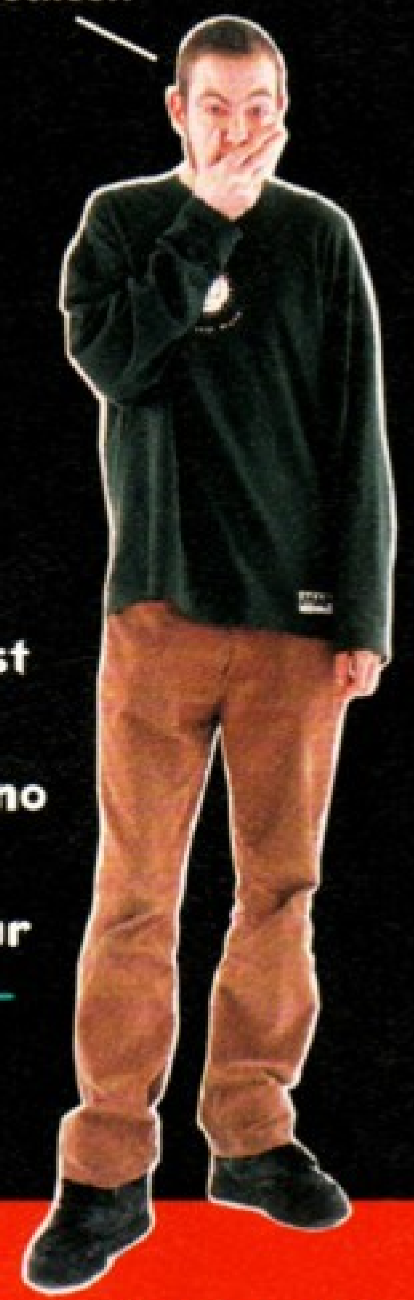






letters™

Hello, I'm RAD and I'm still wearing the same clothes!!



Hello readers. Rad here. And I must say I'm absolutely sweltering in this summery heat. In fact, I could just do with a nice ice lolly to cool me down. And that's where you come in. This month I want you to send me, along with your letters, an ice cream. A chocolatey one preferably, or perhaps a Mini Milk, but definitely no Walls Feastwiches, because I can't stand them. You might want to to pack them into one of those freezer bag things because they're no good to me all melted and sticky and dribbling out of the envelope. Send your lollies (and letters) to me at FULLY AIR-CONDITIONED LETTERS, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU. Thank you.

PS Actually if you can find any of those Funny Feet lollies I'll be your best friend. They're my favourite.

I'M NOT A FOOL

DEAR SSM,

I hate it the way your mag, and others as well, each month say that a certain game is an essential buy. This is because I just can't afford it.

I bought my Saturn just before Christmas with Virtua Fighter. Later I immediately went out and bought your magazine and don't get me wrong it is a very good magazine, but it is just when you write things like "You are a fool if you don't buy Sega Rally" or "Virtua Fighter 2 is a must-have game" because not everyone can afford them.

I dream about owning Virtua Fighter 2 and am desperate to own Sega Rally but I just can't afford it. So next time you write something like "You must buy this game and you are a fool if you don't", just remember that we are not all loaded even though we would love to buy the game.

Anon, Harborne, B'Ham.

Calm down. And, you're missing the mark a bit. We're not saying that you're the scum of the Earth if you don't have X-Men. We're saying that if you're buying a game this month and it isn't the one we're recommending then, and only then, are you the scum of the Earth. It's a figure of speech.

PC OFF

DEAR SSM,

Today I read what the Teletext magazine Digitiser had to say. I was very annoyed at what I had read. It said that the ace game NiGHTS was going to be converted onto PC along with games such as Sega Rally, Virtua Cop and Daytona USA, along with Virtua Fighter Remix. What are Sega up to? We faithful Saturn owners were promised that the above games would be SATURN ONLY. What is the point then if Sega are going to release all their top titles onto the PC?

As you are the best magazine around, I hope you could tell me whether what Digitiser said was correct. I love my Saturn, and I don't want it to be discredited by PC releases. After all, if Sega are releasing Saturn games to the PC, why don't we get some games from the PC-only market? Thanks a lot, keep up the ace work.

Charles Livesey, Blackburn, Lancs.

Wee-e-ee-eel, Chiggs, that's actually TRUE. Sega are releasing some of their titles on PC, and some PC-only educational titles too. But don't worry too much as there'll be a long lag in release dates – over a year in some cases.



NiGHTS looks like he's trying to escape from the magazine here. Stop him readers, or you'll never play his game.

I HAVE NEVER SEEN A GIRL

TO ALL THE LOVELY PEOPLE AT SSM,

Oi! Listen to me cause I have just come up with an exclusive idea! Girls in console games aren't just there for the sake of being in a game. They want to be in a "Console Babe of the Year" competition. Personally I have always found Sarah of Virtua Fighter pretty attractive. But you could get the whole of Britain (Ireland as well) to send in the name of "My Kinda Woman" in a compo. Also, girls could send in "Hunk of the Year" (console). What do you think? I think it's the best idea in the world. See ya old chums of SSM.

EC Penguin, N Ireland.

Do any other readers have sad and forlorn ideas of this calibre? If so, send them in, so we can publicly deride and scorn you.

DELIBERATE MISTAKE CORNER

DEAR SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE,

Thank you for being an up to date mag, in the Saturn department that is. My query is about a certain adrenaline-pumping game that had me popping pills at every turn. The game I'm talking about is of course WipEout. The thing that puzzled me was not the game but the box – yes, the blinking box. If you ever have the chance to look at it, as you carefully stack it on your shelf and being proud that it's the only thing in the room that's tidy, pay close attention to the small print (as they say) and you'll notice the words "Two-player head-to-head link-up" printed in the top right hand corner.

After seeing this I read the instruction manual for the first time in 18 years of my life and no further information on this subject or any hint was given.

So is this just a matter of not bothering to change the graphics design for the Saturn? Or is it a possible host for the new Saturn link cable? Please Sega Saturn Magazine, is this fact or fiction?

Yours faithfully Saturnlly owner,

James Davis, Kingston-Upon-Thames, Surrey.

PS By popping pills I meant Panadol pills, it was all those long nights on WipEout.

Well spotted, Eagle Eyes. Have you ever thought of becoming a Cherokee forest tracker?

MY WIFE LIKES BUG AS WELL

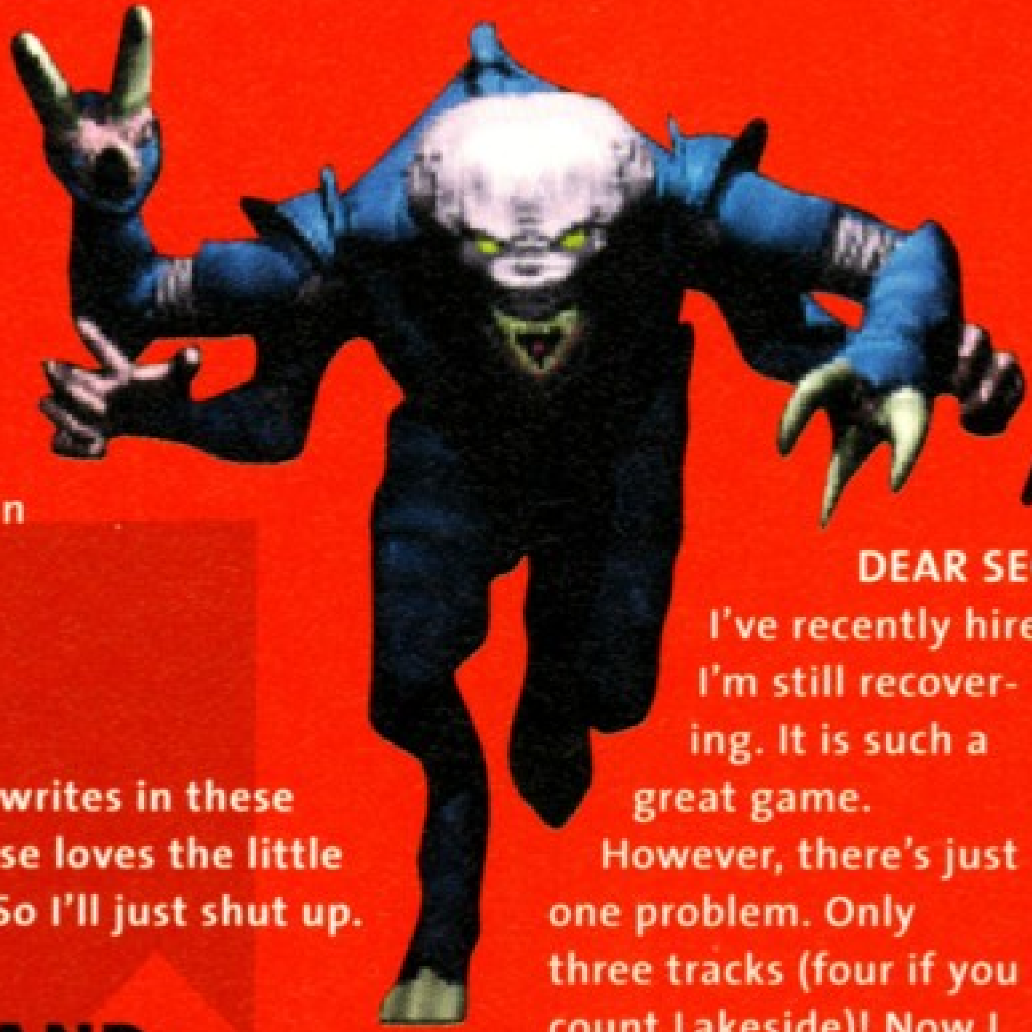
DEAR SSM,

When my wife said choose between a PlayStation or the Saturn I chose the Saturn, knowing that some of the games were diabolical (ie Myst, J Bazookatone, Defcon 5 and Victory Goal). Fortunately I hired these games out first, which prompted me not to buy them. The ones that I did are superb, ie Sega Rally, FIFA 96 and Bug!. My wife always plays that one.

I also keep my nose to the ground to find out what games are coming up. Which is what I like about your magazine. I like to be informed.

One thing that puzzles me is how a game like PGA III can knock the spots off any golf game the Saturn has produced so far. Pebble Beach's pro-

Rad photo by David Titlow.



grammers should be shot.

Can't wait for Doom, Quake, Space Hulk and Alien Trilogy to come out. The sooner the better.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Beardmore, Fareham, Hants.

What is it with Bug! and wives? Everyone who writes in these days is banging on about how much their spouse loves the little feller. Well, not everyone. In fact, only a few people. So I'll just shut up.

YOUR WISH IS OUR COMMAND

DEAR SEGA SATURN MAG,

Hello! I have always wanted to be a games reviewer for a magazine and I was wondering if I could be a reviewer for you! I have had a Saturn since Xmas and I have unfortunately only got two games (Virtua Cop and Worms) but this still doesn't stop me giving my opinions on games to all my friends. In fact most people come to me for advice on game buying etc.

If by any chance you do have a small space on a page for me to review games I would appreciate it if you would let me have a shot and if you don't like my views you can fire me. Since you're so nice and everything and you're not crud like other unofficial Saturn mags I wrote to you as it would be a great honour to review games for you, so please consider my offer. I'm not asking for wages but just to be in the Saturn magazine.

Yours sincerely,

Scott Witham, Abingdon, Oxon.

PS I'm only 14 and you need a teenager's point of view.

Well since we are so nice and everything, we've decided to give you your own review space in this very issue. So here it is:

COMMENT BY SCOTT WITHAM

ADVERTISE GOOD THINGS NOW

DEAR SSM,

Why are Sega letting the PlayStation gain first place in the market place? From day one of the next generation battle of the consoles, it's the PlayStation that has been getting all the attention on the TV and the gaming press. True that in the hardware department the PS has got better 3D capabilities, but there is not that much difference between it and the Saturn, and the Saturn is easily better than the PS in the 2D and sound departments.

But everyone knows it's not hardware that sells a console, it's the games, and even though the gameplay should be the reason to buy the games, most people are drawn by the graphics. When the PS was released its two showcase games were Toh Shin Den and Ridge Racer. Both of these games looked better, but weren't a patch on the gameplay or lastability of Daytona or Virtua Fighter on the Saturn.

Now that Sega Rally and VF2 have the best graphics and gameplay on any console, why don't Sega pull their finger out and put a really top notch advertising campaign out on the TV featuring these games – this would really turn the tables on Sony.

I am just a bit worried that if they don't do something soon Sega might start to lose its third party software support due to the lack of Saturn owners.

Andrew Anderson, Stockton, Cleveland.

Why not indeed.



Do you think VF2 should be advertised on the telly? Or what? Why don't you tell us? Go on. Please.

A BONA FIDE GOOD IDEA

DEAR SEGA MAG,

I've recently hired out Sega Rally from Blockbuster and I must say I'm still recovering. It is such a great game.

However, there's just one problem. Only three tracks (four if you count Lakeside)! Now I must admit I've come nowhere near perfection on these tracks, but after hours of practice I got a bit bored. Anyway, now onto my point. After reading your preview of King of Fighters '95 I thought, if a cartridge could be used to store backgrounds why not rally tracks? Just think, a cartridge with five new rally tracks. Sega could charge about £20 a cartridge and I'm sure people wouldn't mind paying. I know I wouldn't! If that worked we could have more levels for Bug!, some new Daytona tracks, almost anything! I know it probably wouldn't work but if it did Sega could make a lot of money. What do you think?

Craig "ICE" Anderson, Coventry.

PS Sorry about all those exclamation marks, I can't seem to help it!!!!



Craig "ICE" Anderson has had a good idea. Another good idea would be to drop that stupid "ICE" bit in his name.

That's actually a really good idea. Sega could make it a fixture of their retail policy that all their big games would get update cartridges (although that might damage the fortunes of sequels). The consumer support would be tremendous, and those who can't afford to buy lots of games could buy the cheaper upgrades for their old ones in between. We're just not sure if you could actually program them like that.

SATURNS ARE THICKER THAN BLOOD

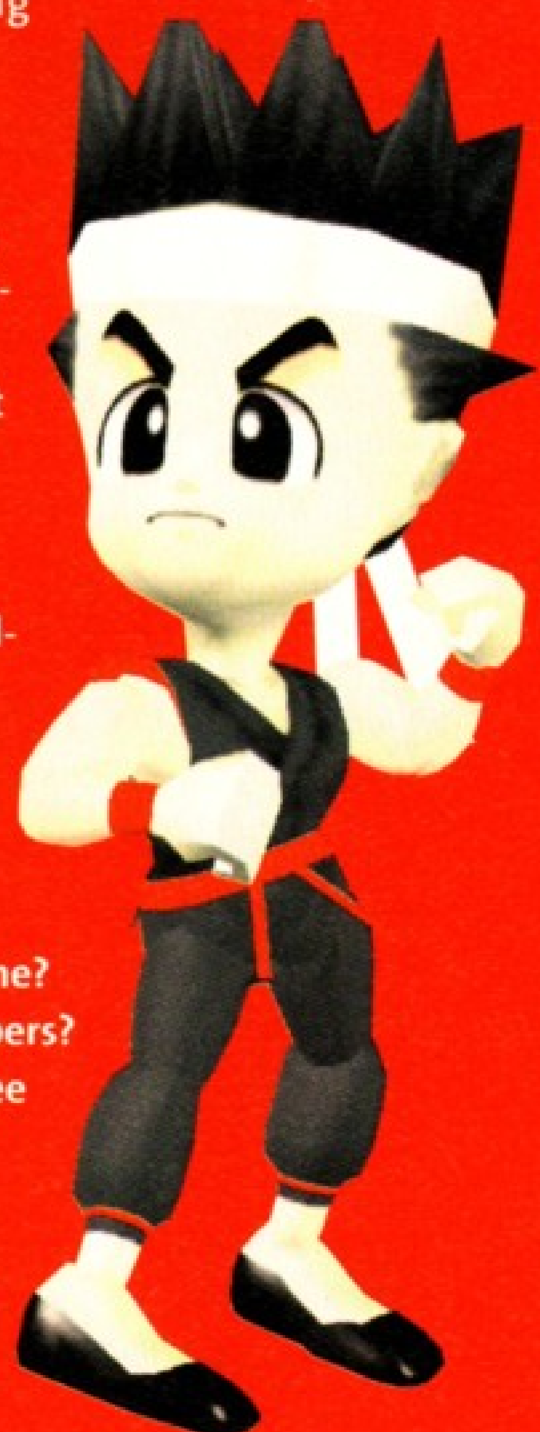
DEAR SSM,

I love my Saturn like a brother, more than my brother in fact, but I'm a little worried about its future. When I bought my black beauty there were many great games to be had – Virtua Cop, Virtua Fighter 2, Sega Rally to name but a few – but now (almost six months later) the rate of decent game production seems to have slowed down considerably!

Sure, X-Men is pretty amazing, and the forthcoming NiGHTS looks wonderful, but unless I purchase games ported over from the PlayStation, there seems nothing to waste my hard-earned pennies on.

The problem is that a friend of mine has a PlayStation, so we play to death a lot of the titles now available, or soon-to-be-available for the Saturn – WipEout, Magic Carpet, Loaded – and now I'm loath to spend £45 on something that won't provide that "brand new" gaming experience. I hope that Saturn developers will forge ahead to produce many great, innovative titles for our machine, rather than the second-hand goods that seem to be on offer.

Daniel Moss, Jesmond, Newcastle Upon Tyne.



What about Sonic X-treme? Or Cop 2? Or Fighting Vipers? Or VF Kids? Or Exhumed? I can see your point, Danny Boy Irish Eyes Are Smiling, but the Saturn has actually got a pretty exciting line-up of original games running from here to Christmas. Come on, cheer up lad.

Q&A

If your gaming nous is titchy, bone up on the gen with Maslowiczy – he's the main games man at Sega, and more dour than an album by Suzanne Vega. Yes, it's that time of the month again readers, where we put YOUR questions to OUR man at the big S and he shows off by answering them. If your brain hurts because of a strange Sega query, why not write to him at AMERICA RRRRAAAWKS!!! Q&A, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU. We'll do our best to help you out.

TEACHERS TODAY, EH?

DEAR SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE,

This is the third time I have written to you and you haven't answered my previous letters. The last time I wrote to you was when you were called er... Sega er... er... what was it now? Ah yes! Sega Magazine, I think it was. So anyway will you please please please print my letter because I've always wanted to see my name in a magazine.

1 I know this question isn't to do with games but I would like to know what's happened to Tom Guise. Has he been transferred to another mag or what? Because I enjoyed reading his reviews/showcases.

2 Soon I will have some money to buy a game. I am a driving games freak and was wondering which to get out of Sega Rally or WipEout as I can't decide. Which one do you think I should get?

3 Lastly are there any games being developed at the moment on the SGL OS? If so, what?

Chris Moore, Odsal, Bradford, W Yorks.

PS Sorry about the handwriting, but I think you should blame that on my English teacher, as she never taught me how to improve my handwriting. Teachers today, eh?

1 Tom was deported to CVG because he's ugly. But he still writes the occasional thing for our mag. When we can stand to look at his hideous face. Or he's wearing a bag on his head. 2 Sega Rally for sure. 3 They're now onto SGL 2-1, a superior version, and lots of games will be using it soon.



"Yo dudes! Tommy G here! Ha ha, I'm back in Saturn Mag at last! Please free me from my CVG prison hell! Ha ha!"

GIZZA JOB

DEAR SSM,

I have a few questions I'd like to ask you, O knowledgeable one!

1 Have you (SSM) got a web site? If so, what is it?

2 Are Oasis better than Blur (sorry I just had to ask!)?

3 Is there or will there be a screen saver for the Saturn, as when I play CDs the screen does linger on for a long old time?

4 Will there be an animation program for the Saturn?

5 Why do Mr and Mrs Beat 'Em Up keep re-vamping old (but good) 16-BIT beat 'em ups? Are they just making an example of the saying "same stuff, different day"?

6 Can you give away some more demo disks? And don't say "Be patient my child" or anything along those lines.

7 Can I be a reviewer? You lot are my heroes!

Robbo, Abingdon, Oxon.

1 Not at the moment, although Sega have one at WWW.sega.com. 2 Why yes. 3 That's highly unlikely. 4 So's that. 5 Why mess with success? 6 We will. 7 Sorry pal.

HE'LL KILL US ALL

DEAR SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE,

Please answer the following questions as I need to know (or I'll kill you).

1 Are Sega going to introduce a budget range for their older games, like Clockwork Knight and Daytona?

2 Is Resident Evil going to be released on Saturn?

3 When is GunGriffon going to be released in the UK?

4 Are 32-BIT versions of Vectorman and Gunstar Heroes on the cards?

5 Any plans for compilations of the Thunderforce and Streets of Rage games?

6 How about new versions of the above?

7 Will Daytona 2 be possible to have a 4-player mode via split screen and link-up? Please.

Thanks for your time, oh and please release KoF '95 as it is absolutely amazing.

Christopher Bexley, Gwent, S Wales.

1 Maybe. 2 Probably not. 3 July. 4 Rumours suggest that one is. But we can't say which. 5 Nope. 6 Yes, for at least on of them. 7 Possibly. Maybe.

FORGOT HIS NAME

DEAR SSM,

Please can you answer these questions. Thank you.

1 Will Manx TT Superbikes come out on the Saturn? If so, when?

2 Will there be any more Virtua games?

3 Will there be any more shooting games using the Virtua Cop gun?

4 Is it true that Bug 2 will be a shoot 'em up?

SEGA SATURN MAG is the best magazine and Saturn is better than the PlayStation.

The Nameless Wonder, Oxley, Wolverhampton.

1 December, just in time for Chrimble. 2 Loads, mate. 3 V Cop 2 and Policenauts for starters, plus more in the pipeline. 4 Noooooo.

AN OLD FLAME WRITES

DEAR SSM,

After reading your magazine for about a year and a half (starting when you were Sega Magazine and I had a Megadrive) I have decided to write in with some questions:

1 Is Command and Conquer going to be released on the Saturn? I have played it on my PC and it is a brilliant game.

2 What will you put on your next demo disk?

3 Will the new Daytona have more tracks?

4 When will AM4 make their own solo game? They helped AM3 with Manx TT.

5 Why does no-one sell Darius at £29.99 as stated for the RRP in your Out Now feature? Everywhere sells it at about £44.99.

6 Who is the character in the middle of your Guardian Heroes review with the red armour and green hair?

Thanks.

Paul Salmon, Hampton, Middx.

1 Yes indeed, and there's a six month exclusive on it too – so no PlayStation version until next year. Ha ha. 2 Wait and see – but hopefully it'll be NiGHTS. 3 Oh hell yes. 4 They won't. Sorry. 5 They're ripping you off. The RRP is £29.99. Report them to the police. 6 Lenny.



(ABOVE) Nice to see mirror shades back in fashion. (BELOW) It's Manx TT Superbikes! How long before we see it on our Saturns? Not long, homebodies.



I'VE SEEN THE LIGHT, BROTHER!

DEAR SSM,

Firstly I'm only a newcomer to your mag and I'm glad that I have seen the light because your mag is brilliant and kicks every other mag's butt. So now I would like you to answer the following questions:

1 Will Virtua Cop be coming with a new gun?

2 Will the new Daytona be cheap like Virtua Fighter Remix?

3 Is the PlayStation a better machine because we always seem to be getting second-class conversions?

4 Will the Saturn be able to cope with Virtua Fighter 3 because the graphics look amazing?

5 Will there be any "Strike" series games from Electronic Arts coming on to the Saturn?

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Armstrong, Maghera, Co Londonderry, N Ireland.

1 You'll be able to buy it without the gun if you've already got one. 2 Unfortunately not – it's a lot more than just a remix, it's a whole new game. 3 No. 4 Yu Suzuki thinks so, and who are we to argue? 5 Soviet Strike, shown in News last issue.


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SONIC TEAM
NiGHTS
into dreams...
SEGA SATURN



THE DREAM TEAM

NiGHTS has come from nowhere to steal the thunder from everything. A flagship showcase title for the Saturn which has got every console owner paying attention. It's so ace we're devoting a whole eight pages to its loveliness. Join us as we take a look around the first finished PAL copy of Sonic Team's latest endeavour...

It all started a few years back with a hasty pencil sketch of a skinny, spiny character called Mr Needlemouse. Six months and numerous transformations later this unlikely hero emerged as Sonic the Hedgehog, fastest land mammal in the world of Mobius and the biggest thing to hit the home games market ever. Pretty soon the world fell in love with Sonic, and his first game spawned numerous sequels, along with cartoons, T-shirts, cakes and all manner of other merchandising. Sonic's strength lay in the quality of both the games and the character within them. Time had been spent on making Sonic an appealing character to play, as well as making the levels themselves enjoyable. This is why there will always be a big distinction between Sonic and Bubsy the Bobcat.

Now, The Sonic Team are credited with having introduced the mascot to the video games scene. Maybe Mario was on the scene first, but few people really gave a stuff who he was until there was a Sonic for him to struggle against in the games war. Now we all know that Sonic is definitely on his way to the Saturn, but the launch of this new console demanded something new. An fast action game with the emphasis on adrenaline playability, slick presentation and of course, a groovy central character. Obviously no-one was in a better position to tackle this brief than the original Sonic Team. The result of their labours – first revealed EXCLUSIVELY in SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE in April – is NiGHTS.

>>







>> A game based both in and on dreamland, NiGHTS grants you control of an all-singing, all-dancing, all-flying, all-Paralooping hero, a demon of the Nightmare world whose spirit of playfulness and individuality has displeased his masters. To escape the soul prison into which he is interred NiGHTS teams up with two youngsters, both of whom are suffering from bad dreams due to their adolescent troubles. The deal is this – NiGHTS will free them from their nightmares if they can free him from his. So to start with the player has three different characters under his control – but it's with NiGHTS himself (the main bulk of the game) that it becomes one of the coolest gaming experiences ever devised.

Each level starts with Claris or Elliot (our teen heroes) heading towards imprisoned NiGHTS, clutching a red Courage Ideya. The five Ideya represent the five positive aspects of personality – the others are white (purity), green (wisdom), yellow (hope) and blue (intelligence). Once red is plugged in to NiGHTS' cell he is freed for a limited amount of time. To remain free he has to find the others before this time runs out (although it's replenished with each Ideya he finds). Once all of Claris or Elliot's Ideya are in place NiGHTS is free to tackle his own enemies – the Nightmaren demon bosses. Once NiGHTS beats them all he's free forever, and it just so happens he foils their plot to take over the realm of Nightopia – land of good dreams – along the way.



This abandoned car chases NiGHTS along the ground!





So how does NiGHTS lay his hands on the Ideya? Why, by cunningly negotiating a number of courses, known as Mares. Each Mare holds the key to an Ideya, along with a number of hazards and bonuses. Mares, being magic dreams, replenish themselves completely each time you return to the start (by completing the loop course). The Ideya can only be freed by collecting enough Chips (all explained elsewhere), and some Mares require NiGHTS to fly through three or four times before moving on. After you've freed your Ideya, deposit it at the Ideya Palace and you're off to the next course. Once all four Mares of a level are completed, it's on to the boss. This may all sound simple enough, but just you wait until you get a go of it...

DOWN FOR A-LIFE

A few issues back we spilt a few beans on the Artificial Life (or A-Life) system employed by NiGHTS. If by any chance you missed that issue (because you're stupid or something) we'll just explain it again. It's a feature developed by the Team which evolves Nightopia and its inhabitants. The more you play the game, the more your surroundings and their occupants change. New Nightopians appear, their cultures expand, and their environment throws up new hills and valleys. In fact, if you're in the right (or wrong) place at the right (or wrong) time you can actually be decked by a new plateau springing up from the floor! A-Life is one of the things which tells you that there's more to NiGHTS than just beating the end boss – there's always something new going on in Nightopia (A-Life is saved to memory) and better still, your action in destroying the Nightmaren and rendering the joint peaceful directly affect the proceedings!





Each of the characters in NiGHTS has their own brilliant rendered intro, setting the scene and telling their story. This shows Claris' nightmare about her forthcoming audition for the local musical. It's dead sweet. And a bit scary, to be honest.





ANALOGUE IN

NiGHTS is the first game to utilise Sega's new analogue controller. This might seem like a bit of a gimmick, but once you've played NiGHTS you'll realise that the looser, easier to roll and more accurate analogue pad is almost essential if you want to get the most from your little flying jester bloke. Obviously analogue pads are also ace for other games too (especially driving games), but this certainly comes into its own with Sonic Team's latest. Honest, it is just like flying. It is.







SLED CITY

Another feature of NiGHTS we revealed in a previous issue was the NiGHTS Bobsled – a section of the game where NiGHTS hits the ice in bobsleigh form and rides slalom, collecting bonuses on his way. Well this section is finished now (it's in the Frozen Bell stage) and it's absolutely ace! NiGHTS bombs down the slide at a million miles an hour, and his movement up the slippery sides – where most of the goodies are secreted – is affected by his velocity and turn angle, much like in real life. You'll probably have to tackle this bit a couple of times before racking up enough Blue Chips, but that's no bad thing as it's an exhilarating change of pace.



BRAKE IT DOWN

All this flying in the sky business is all very well – but what happens if you start feeling all airsick and queasy? Well, unlike with 'planes and helicopters, with NiGHTS you can just stop for a while to get your breath back. Doing this couldn't be easier, as NiGHTS' big floppy shoes act as superb air brakes. Simply pressing the L and R buttons at the top of top of the pad together halts NiGHTS in his tracks almost immediately. However, there's a n even neater trick on offer – each top button corresponds to the representative foot, and by only applying one airbrake NiGHTS begins to dance in the air, spiralling and pirouetting around on his heel whilst changing direction, or twisting his whole body around whilst flying. This doesn't seem to make a big difference to the game itself, but it does make a big difference to the feel when you're playing it. It might just look like faffing about, but it feels very serene. Although you're not going to believe that until you play it.





Links make points. And what do points make? Why they make higher scores at the end of the level, and that's the aim of the game.



Ooh dear, it took a while to complete that course, not much bonus time remaining. And that means fewer points. Bah!

UNDER THE SEA

NiGHTS certainly is a clever demon beastie. As well as flying through the air, sliding down icy slopes and bouncing off walls, he's also able to breathe underwater! Indeed, it appears the only thing he can't do is walk on the ground. Still, never mind, because that wouldn't act as impetus for as entertaining a sub-game as his aquatic abilities. One of Elliots' levels contains a hidden spring under a cave, and should NiGHTS find it he's able to swim around looking for bonuses. Suddenly, a harsh current sweeps him into another behind-the-character super-speed adventure as he swims through a narrow tunnel switching lanes to find the best bonuses and hit as many loops as possible. This time though his controls are reversed to simulate NiGHTS' flipper-powered endeavours.



This is Gillwing, the first boss. And also the name of a cafe near my house, oddly enough.





SHOWCASE





LOOP OF FAITH

Sometimes NiGHTS encounters a yellow and blue loop. This is a bonus loop, and it's a very good idea to go through it. NiGHTS' star trail changes – for a limited period only – to a solid yellow ribbon of light, and by performing Paraloops of various sizes he can rack up bonus points. The loops go from Small through to Large and Giant, with different points for each. The real fun, though,. comes in using NiGHTS' air-brakes to dance in the air, performing Twisters, T Drops, Pirouettes and Hurricanes. It takes a while to work out what these are exactly, as opposed to randomly twisting the pad, but it's worth persevering as it's excellent fun showing of to your friends and generally poncing about. It really does feel like flying in a dream. We're not just saying that.



Look at that gorgeous trail. Eeh. if only you could see it moving, you see it's amazing.



That multi-coloured hoop is the source of the pleasing sub-game with the ribbons. Aah.







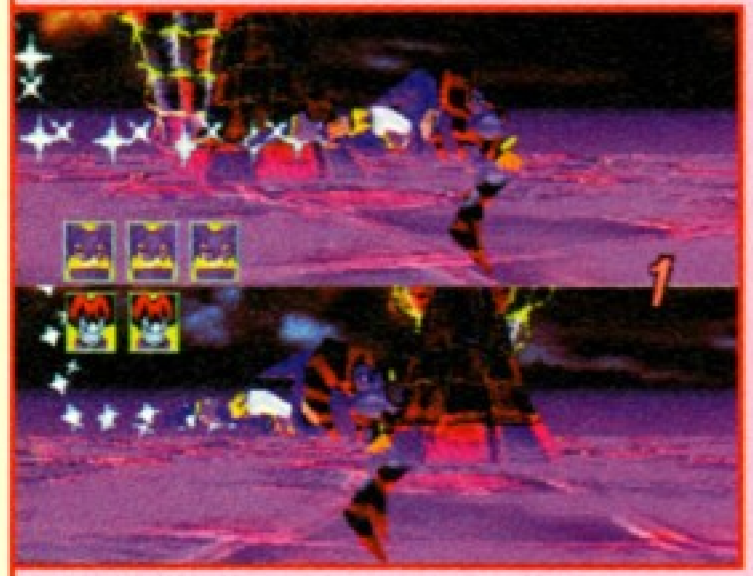
Ooh, little Elliot looks all excited about his first level. Bless his little socks.





I KILL YOU! HA HA! I KILL YOU!

Included within NiGHTS is a separate 2-player split-screen VS mode option. One player controls heroic NiGHTS, and the other the evil Reala. The characters are placed into a confined arena (with a big pointy thing in the middle) and fly around attempting to Paraloop or Drill Dash each other into submission. The winning player is either the first to score three hits, or he who has the most belts under his belt when the time limit runs out. It's a pretty entertaining little diversion, but we're slightly doubtful as to its lasting appeal. Still, what do you expect for free?







KNOW THE DRILL

NiGHTS abilities are multifarious – you can certainly tell he was created as a top-flight ninja demon by the Lord of Nightmare. Apart from the Paraloop he's in possession of another, simpler attack. Pressing either A, B or C sends NiGHTS into a Drill Dash. As the component names of this technique suggest, NiGHTS spins around and shoots forward at an accelerated pace. This bashes any Nightmarean NiGHTS hits into oblivion, and also allows him to turn quickly by spanging off walls or other indestructible objects – plus of course it makes it easier to reach the Ideya Prison when you've only a couple of seconds of NiGHTS-time remaining. However using this ability costs NiGHTS energy – there's only a certain number of times he can use his spin, indicated by the green bar in the bottom-left corner of the screen which diminishes with each twist. Luckily there is a way for NiGHTS to top up this bar – by gliding through the many floating rings which occupy each level. Every time NiGHTS shoots through one his Drill Dash energy is restored a tiny amount. With careful enough flying it's possible to fill the bar right up – enough energy to fight most bosses with!











PLAY BETTER TO WIN THE GAME

Whenever either of the kids wakes up and their dream is ended, NiGHTS imparts some final words of wisdom to aid them in their future attempts. Each of these game hints is fully illustrated, partially to demonstrate how to perform the actions mentioned, and partially just to look lovely. Many of the hints are actually specific to the section of the game in which your journey came to an end. Sadly all the ones in our version were untranslated from the Japanese, so we've had to guess what they're about for the most part.





CASH YOUR CHIPS

You might think that chips are just those potato things you have with your tea. But you'd be wrong – there are all sorts of chips, some of which are relevant to NiGHTS. Silicon chips inside your Saturn run the game, and NiGHTS himself runs on blue ball things called Blue Chips, which float around in the sky awaiting collection. The Ideya are only freed from their cages (known as Ideya Capture) by depositing sufficient Chips within them, so NiGHTS' first priority is to gather enough for the job. The amount of Blue Chips required varies from level to level, but you'll know when you've got enough because the Chip Counter in the top left corner of the screen turns from blue to orange. Beginners should cash their Chips as quickly as they're earned, as once NiGHTS' flying time is over he'll plummet to the ground, scattering the baubles across the floor and leaving Claris or Elliot to pick up after him. Expert players, however, should note that they can save precious bonus-scoring time by heading around the course until they've got all the Chips they need – and then racing around again for bonus Chips before depositing the Ideya for more NiGHTS-time.







Amazing top-down sections too!!









Fly through the trees, with the greatest of ease. And leaves. An possibly little biting insects, if real trees are anything to go by.



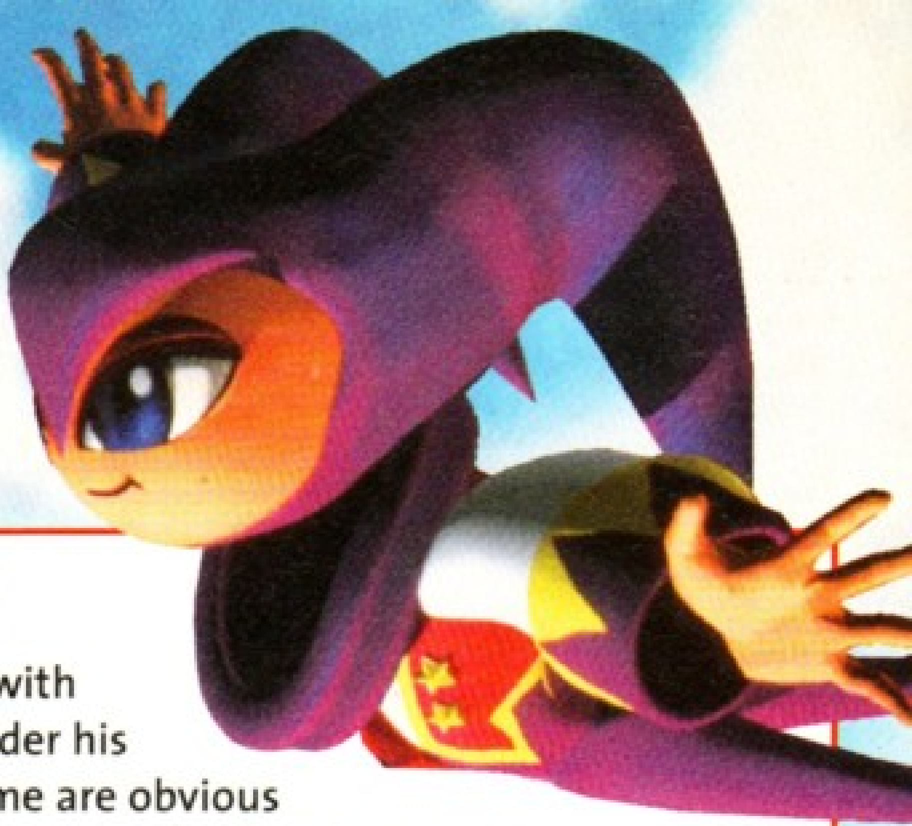


CLOCK THE HAMMER

We all know what it's like – you're right in the middle of an exciting dream about teaming up with a flying sprite to rid the world of nightmares and a familiar ringing enters your subconscious. At first it works its way into the fabric of your imagination, until your dim brain finally recognises its chirp and awakens you. You might struggle to keep your alarm clock from ruining your fun, but it's generally inevitable it will. Unless, of course, you really are teamed up with a flying sprite. See, when Claris or Elliot are in human form, they're constantly chased by a giant flying, ringing alarm clock, which casts the shiny light of dawn down upon them. Should the kids find themselves trapped in its beam they'll wake up, thus ending their adventures. the only way to save them is to run like the wind to avoid the dreaded bells until you've collected a NiGHTS-freeing Ideya. Now NiGHTS takes over the dream, freeing you from the attentions of the timepiece that could spell the end to your hopes of musical stardom. Or basketball stardom, depending.







WHAT'S THE SCORE?

When NiGHTS (or Claris/Elliot) completes a Mare, his performance is rated in terms of the speed at which the Chips were collected, the number of Nightmaren toppled, the number of links racked up and most crucially apart from speed, how many bonus Chips were collected. A polygonous rotating rating appears, and marks you from A to F. If you complete the Mare as one of the kids you're in for an automatic F as you've squandered your NiGHTS time. If you've been good and scored loads of bonuses you'll get an A. The balance of your Mare scores and fight against the boss gives you an overall total score for the level. This is pretty important, because you can only fight Wizeman once you've scored a C or above on all your levels. So, for a tip, after collecting the Ideya within a Mare, your best bet is to not cash it in straight away, but to tour the Mare a couple more times collecting all the Chips again (they'll have turned gold to notify you of their bonusdom). Now cash in the Ideya and hopefully you'll do okay.









This map shows the layout of each level, and the path of each course (or Mare) around it. Pay attention, because later levels have some spectacularly complex Mares and it's easy to forget where you are. Indeed, The Confusion is an apt sub-title for Soft Museum.

STAGE DRESSING

NiGHTS' environment is littered with accoutrements which help or hinder his progress or sometimes both. Some are obvious such as the barrels suspended in the sky shoot NiGHTS out at super-speed should he pass through them. Some aren't, like the semi-translucent air pockets which bounce NiGHTS around like bumpers (again at high speed, but making your controls unpredictable). The trickiest ones are the bonus barrels. These bright orange balls float in front of NiGHTS after he makes contact with them. A number on the side of the barrel indicates how many hoops it wants to be manoeuvred through (or how many objects you have to pick up with it) until it splits open to grant you extra points. If you're especially lucky you might even get a power-up too. But be warned – earning such bonuses is nowhere near as easy as it sounds, you have to pull off a performing seal act and steer the thing with your nose, hoping against hope it doesn't just float away.



RED ARROWS, SCHMED ARROWS

NiGHTS' main magical ability is his Paraloop. As NiGHTS flies through the air, a trail of mystical star energy disperses behind him. If NiGHTS joins these stars together by performing a roll in the air he opens a vortex which sucks all the matter within it into space. The bigger the Paraloop, the more powerful the vortex. This means titchy 'Loops merely catch enemies and Chips inside their parameters, bigger ones draw in objects just above or to the side, and humungous ones vacuum everything in the surrounding area into their heart. Good objects, like stars and Blue Chips, are deposited straight into NiGHTS' pocket, whereas bad ones such as Nightmaren vanish, never to be seen again.









NiGHTS looks like he's being licked there.







I HAVE THE POWER!

Power-ups are one of those inescapable inevitabilities of just about every game, and perhaps the most amazing thing about the ones found in NiGHTS is their instant familiarity. They appear as coded icons and perform fairly perfunctory duties. One, with a purple fireball emblazoned upon it, wipes out all enemies on the screen. A more novel item, decorated with a Nightopian head, grants NiGHTS a few moments with a chirpy Nightopian wingman who collects all the objects NiGHTS passes. The most common pick-ups are the golden stars, which huddle in their multitudes all over everywhere. These are points bonuses, which might sound a bit feeble in the grand scheme of things, but NiGHTS is a game where points matter.









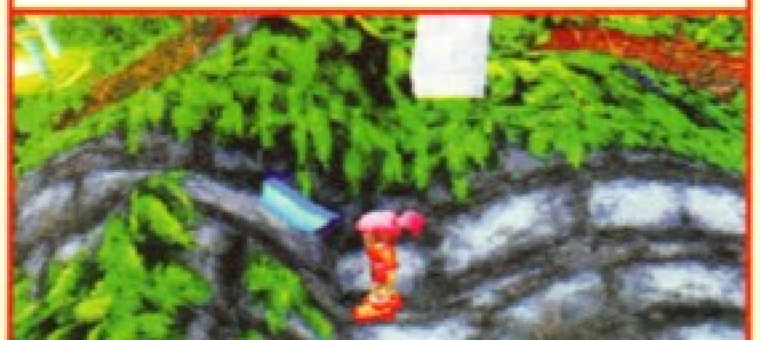
LOOP THROUGH HOOPS

Each stage of Night is stuffed full of groups of bright orange spheres arranged into rings. These aren't just there for decoration (although they are very pretty and I wish they some some around my area instead of all that concrete). What NiGHTS is supposed to do, right, is fly through the centre of them, whereupon he is awarded points, along with extra Drill Dash power (explained elsewhere). The thing is that these loops seldom lurk on their own – they're generally part of a small circuit of circles, and the more of these NiGHTS flies through without missing one the more his score is multiplied. You're informed of your progress by a Link indicator flashing on screen telling you how many loops you've flown through, or Chips or bonuses you've collected in one go. Indeed, grabbing just about anything in NiGHTS opens to you up to a multiple multiplier. This might sound like a fairly pointless exercise, but remember that the amount of points you score in each level of NiGHTS helps determine your overall rating at the end of the stage.




SOFT MUSEUM

The kookiest stage of NiGHTS has to be Claris' Soft Museum stage. The whole level, whilst looking solid enough, is made of putty, warping and bouncing with every fall of her feet. Things get even weirder for NiGHTS as he flies through a rubber building festooned with mirrors which reflect his every move, and the play environment. Getting bounced around inside here is as confusing a situation as you're likely to encounter. Unless you're studying for a maths degree.

WE WILL CRUSH PUNY NiGHTS!



One of the most spectacular thing about NiGHTS is the scale of its bosses. Each one is either huge, or commands a sprawling domain full of hazards. Every boss requires a unique method of destruction. To give you some idea of what we're talking about, here's a selection of our faves...

PUFFY



A giant opera-singing bouncy Weeble of a boss. The only way to defeat her is by throwing her through her stage, using her bulk to smash down the obstacles in the way until finally lobbing her into a cage at the end.

JACKAL



An evil flying demon armed with giant playing cards, which he throws in threes. These magical projectiles glide towards NiGHTS at high speed, leaving a fat tracer trail behind, which often obscures the flight path of the ones behind of the boss himself. Once you've dodged the cards you still have to work to near the blighter before hitting him.

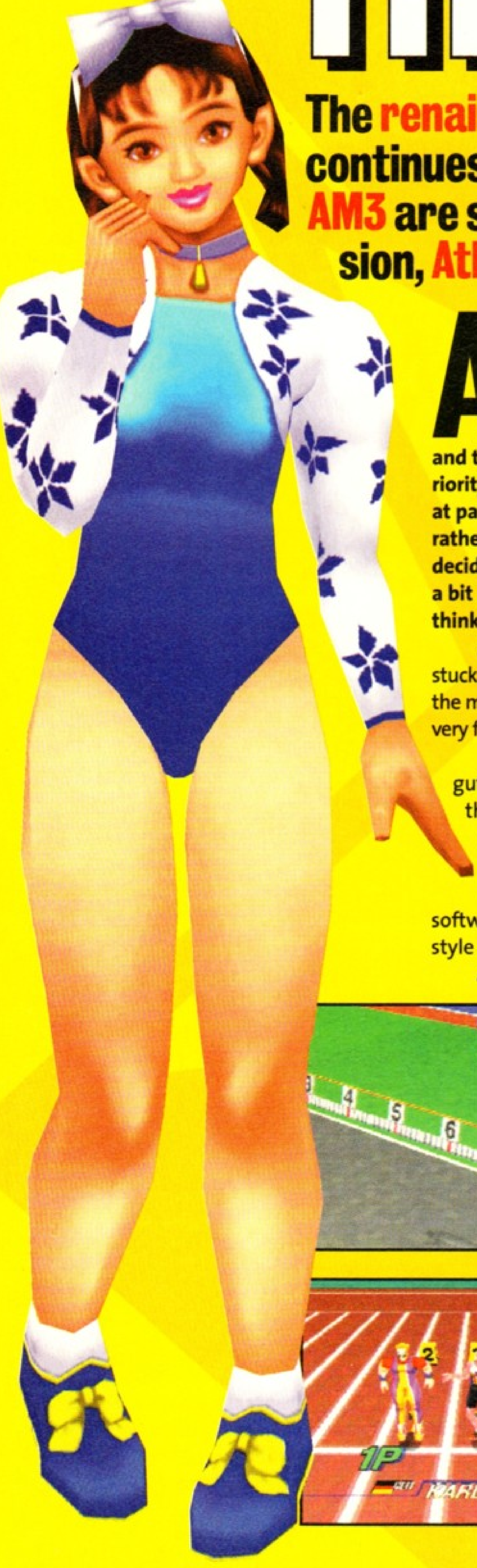
CLAWZ



This boss protects himself by surrounding his lair with a rotating wheel of mice on poles. Not the most orthodox of defences, perhaps, but tidy nonetheless. See, he can only be beaten by destroying his mouses, which are only vulnerable when they're flashing. Sounds simple enough, but try dealing with it in 3D!

GET ON THE GOOD FOOT

The renaissance of the classic button-bashing athletics games continues! US Gold won the Olympics license, but Sega's very own AM3 are set to keep joypads burning with their arcade conversion, Athlete Kings. ROB BRIGHT is on the starting blocks.







A long time ago, when man reached a state of civilisation comfortable enough to make hunting a more mechanical and effortless process, he decided to celebrate the fact by eulogising the various hunting methods and turning them into a show of strength and superiority over every other species. Rather than running at pace after a pig, he decided to run after nothing, rather than throwing a spear at galloping elk he decided to throw a spear at nothing. Ok, so it seems a bit stupid but then athletics, like all sports when you get to thinking about them, is a bit strange anyway.

Anyhow, the idea that started out with the Ancient Greeks has stuck, and now we have an Olympic celebration every four years with the most super-fit humans on the planet gathering together to run very fast at nothing and throw spears at nothing among other things.

But the really sadistic athletes aren't happy slogging their guts out in just one event, they want to do them all, or ten of them at least. The supreme decathlete thus earns the honour of being the greatest athlete on Earth. Sega's new title, designed in part to coincide with the Olympics, is based around the Decathlon, and it comes at a time when other software developers are also bringing out the old 'Track and Field' style athletics sims.



Before you start each event, a little demonstration pops up to show you how to control your athlete.

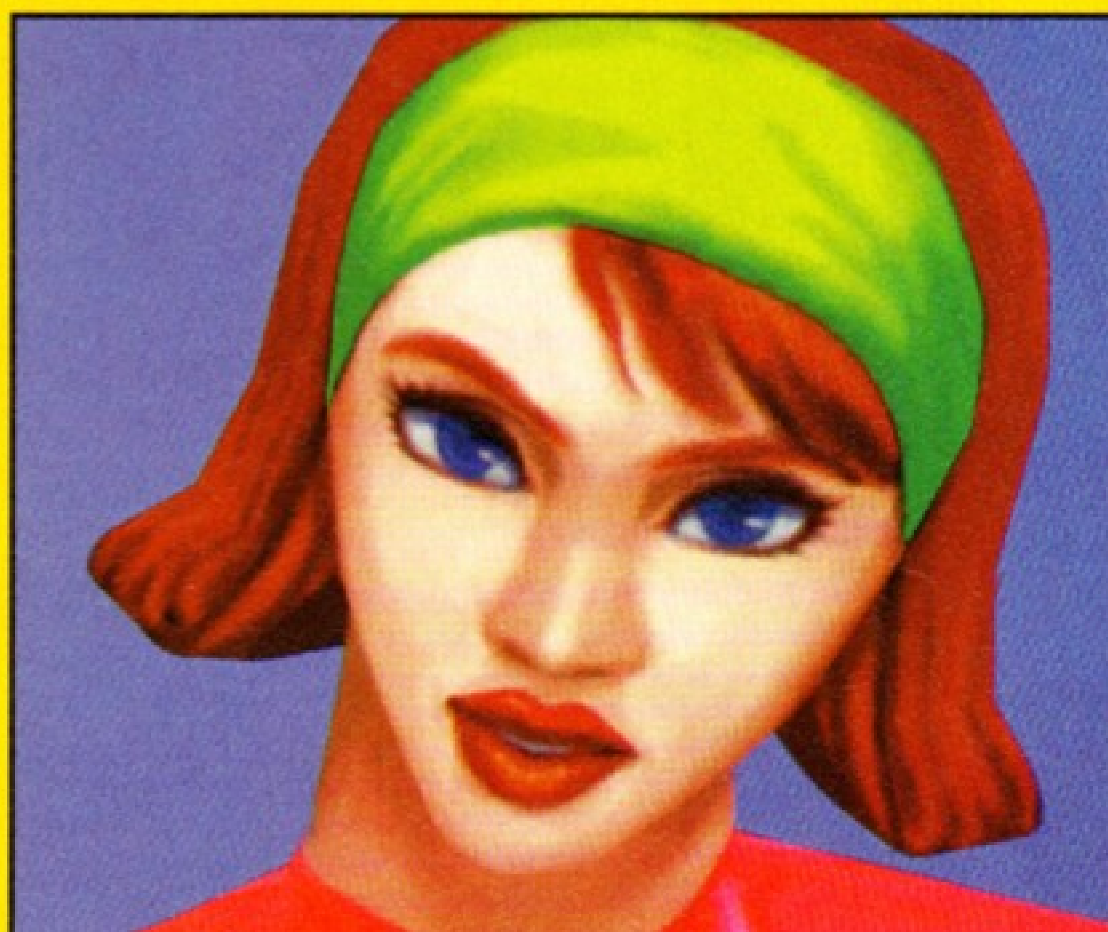
Athlete Kings originally went under the name of Decathlete, although a licensing problem meant the name had to be changed for a UK release. Essentially this is the same as the arcade game, using at it does the STV board and moving at 60 frames a second which is exactly the same as Virtua Fighter 2.



Athlete Kings is a long way from those old track and field games you might have played at your arcade, utilising the best that 3D polygon technology has to offer to create a sense of complete realism, be it the look of the arena itself or the movement of the athletes.



Athlete Kings is still some way from completion although it should be available by around September. Hopefully we'll have a full review in next month's issue.



Bonjour mon ami. Tu aime le music pop eh?





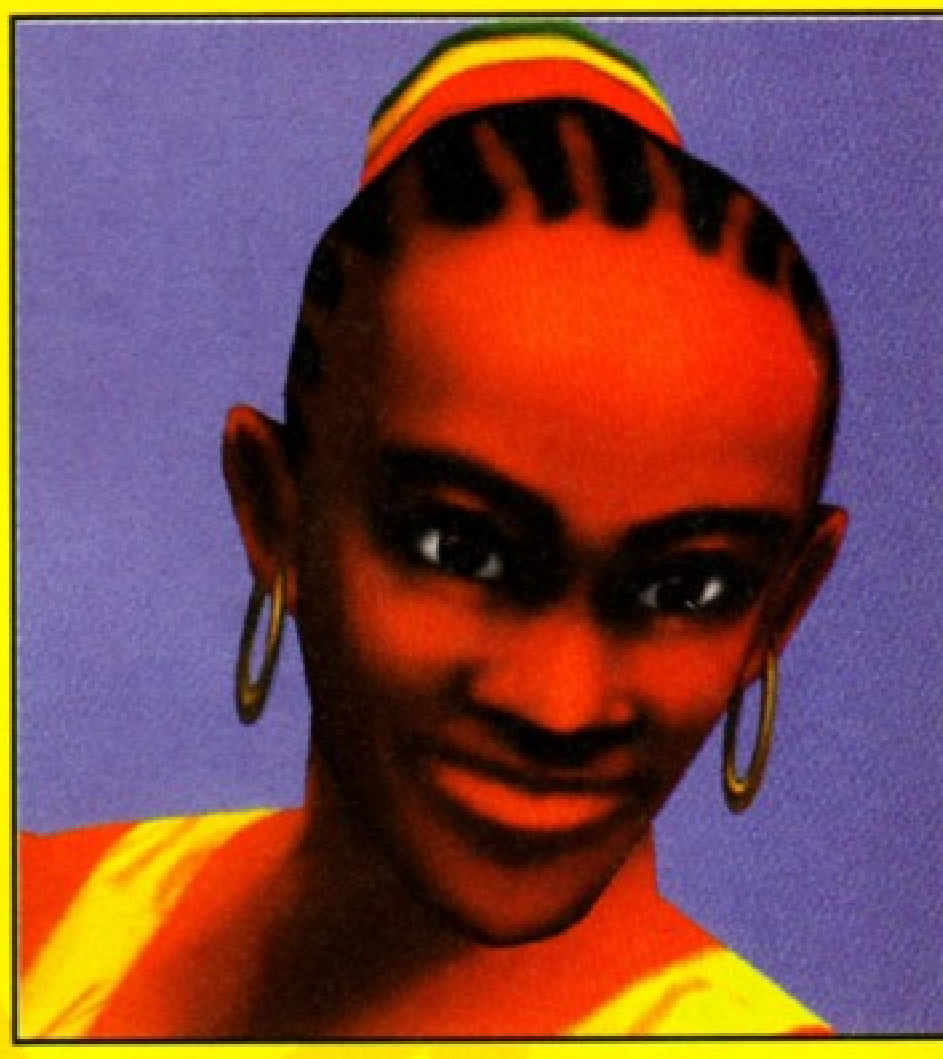


To get the perfect trajectory in the high jump you'll want an angle of 45°, and of course, plenty of power in your run up. And don't forget to flick up those legs as you go sailing over the bar. The world record is 2m 20cm. If you want to attempt this then your first jump will have to be at about 2 metres.



As you sprint the 100 metres the viewing angle gradually revolves about the sprinters, showing off the amazing graphics. Most of the events are viewed like this.





THE EVENTS

As everyone knows, the decathlon involves ten events. If you ever did one of those 'five star awards' at school you'll have some idea of how it works. For every event, points are awarded according to either the time you achieve in track events or the distances and heights you achieve in field events. They're then all added up and the person with the most points is officially declared the king of athletes! Anyway, here are the ten events in the order that you do them...

100 METRES

Perhaps the greatest of events and also one of the most nerve racking, the 100 metres sprint is ideal for those of a more neurotic disposition. In some respects the race is won or lost on the start, although there are always those sprinters who really pick up pace in the later half of the race.

Technique: *Simply a matter of bashing two buttons in whatever style suits you. The one drawback is that the buttons aren't positioned together so the rapid rubbing between the two is largely impossible.*







Li and Jeff face off in the sprint. You might think it's a bit unfair having a man and a woman racing each other but it makes little difference in this game. Hey, that's equality for you, you hear!

400 METRES

The hardest of the sprints, mixing power and stamina in equal measure, the 400 metres is normally one of the most decisive events in the Decathlon. Some athletes tend to go off fast and look to preserve a lead, while others go for an even pace around the first 300 metres and attempt a burst of speed down the final straight.

Technique: *You'd think that this would be exactly the same as the 100 metres, but the 400 metres involves making use of a stamina bar.*















SHOT PUT

You always recognise the shot putters in an athletics tournament because they look like huge Stig-of-the-Dump type characters, covered in Neanderthal hair, and they're almost always from Germany.

Technique: *This one's done a bit differently from what you'd expect. Rather than bashing the button to collect power, the power bar goes up and down as the putter prepares for the throw. The idea is to press the button when the power is high and keep the button down until the perfect angle is achieved.*

As if you couldn't guess, Aleksei's strengths come mainly in the throwing events. One of his weakest is unquestionably the 1500 metres, just like ole' Daley.















That really is quite an enormous chin Aleksei's got there.

LONG JUMP

Anyone who knows athletics knows that the best long jumpers are almost always the best sprinters. Once in the jump, a bicycle movement with the legs helps to propel the jumper further into the sandpit.

Technique: *Some hardcore button stabbing is what's required first, but timing to hit the board just right is also essential. It's then a matter of finding the perfect angle of ascent and quickly bashing the buttons again to get some useful leg-kick.*













Whatever you do, do not get smashed on rum before entering any of the events. Especially the javelin or pole vault.



1500 METRES

This is the event that finishes off the decathlon, and it's are mark of competitors sadism that after pushing every muscle and limb to near breaking point, they finish off by running round the track three and three-quarter times. The main advice where the 1500 metres is concerned is simply to finish it.

Technique: *Get ready for the early inset of arthritis with this one, as players are required to keep jabbing at the same two buttons for what feels like an eternity. Like the 400 metres there's a stamina bar, but the difference here is that players also use the D-pad to weave in and out of other racers..*











In the 1500 metres there are lots of computer runners as well as the two competitors. They have several functions including setting the pace and boxing racers in to make the whole experience a bit more exciting. Try and stay on the inside at all times.

DISCUS

A kind of mix between javelin and shot put, discus involves lots of power but an equal measure of composure as well so you don't get dizzy with all that spinning. Getting the discus on an aerodynamic trajectory is also important.

Technique: *In terms of technique, the discus is the most complicated of the throwing events. Power is built up by spinning the D-pad. When the throwers arm reaches the right point to get a throw within the measuring area it's a matter of finding the perfect angle.*









110 METRES HURDLES

Most hurdlers will tell you that the best technique in this event involves scraping the very top of the hurdle without toppling it. Getting the perfect number of paces between hurdles is also very important.

Technique: *Like the 100 metres, the hurdles involves the dual button bashing but also a jump as well. getting a good time is all about developing a perfect rhythm between the running and jumping.*







Not only is she a very chic diva, but Ellen Reggiani is also pretty sharp when it comes to the running events.









Joe's going to fail here because he's jumping from much too far out. But then, he does wear a cap backwards.







It's Li Huang having a stab at the javelin. The perfect angle to launch it is 45°.





Joe Kudou is one of the allrounders in the game, as is Rick Blade. Having said that, anyone taking part in the decathlete needs to be a bit of an allrounder anyway.

HIGH JUMP

This is the event where the competitors normally spend about three hours psyching themselves up by swinging back and forth on their toes and blowing out their cheeks a lot. A refined technique is essential if you want to jump that extra few centimetres.

Technique: *One of the most difficult events to master in Athlete Kings. The player starts by gathering a bit of momentum with some sincere button bashing, but on reaching the bar, stops and holds down an alternative button for just the amount of time necessary to get the perfect angle of ascent. It's them a matter of using the direction pad to flip up the legs as they go travelling over the bar.*

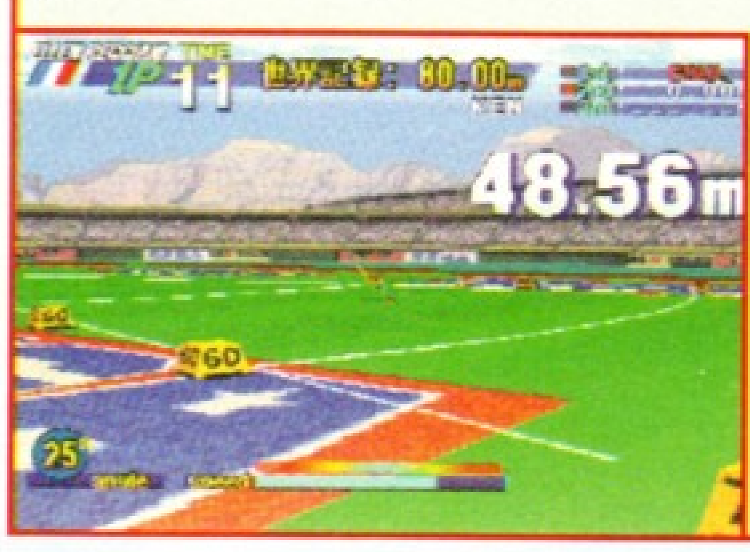




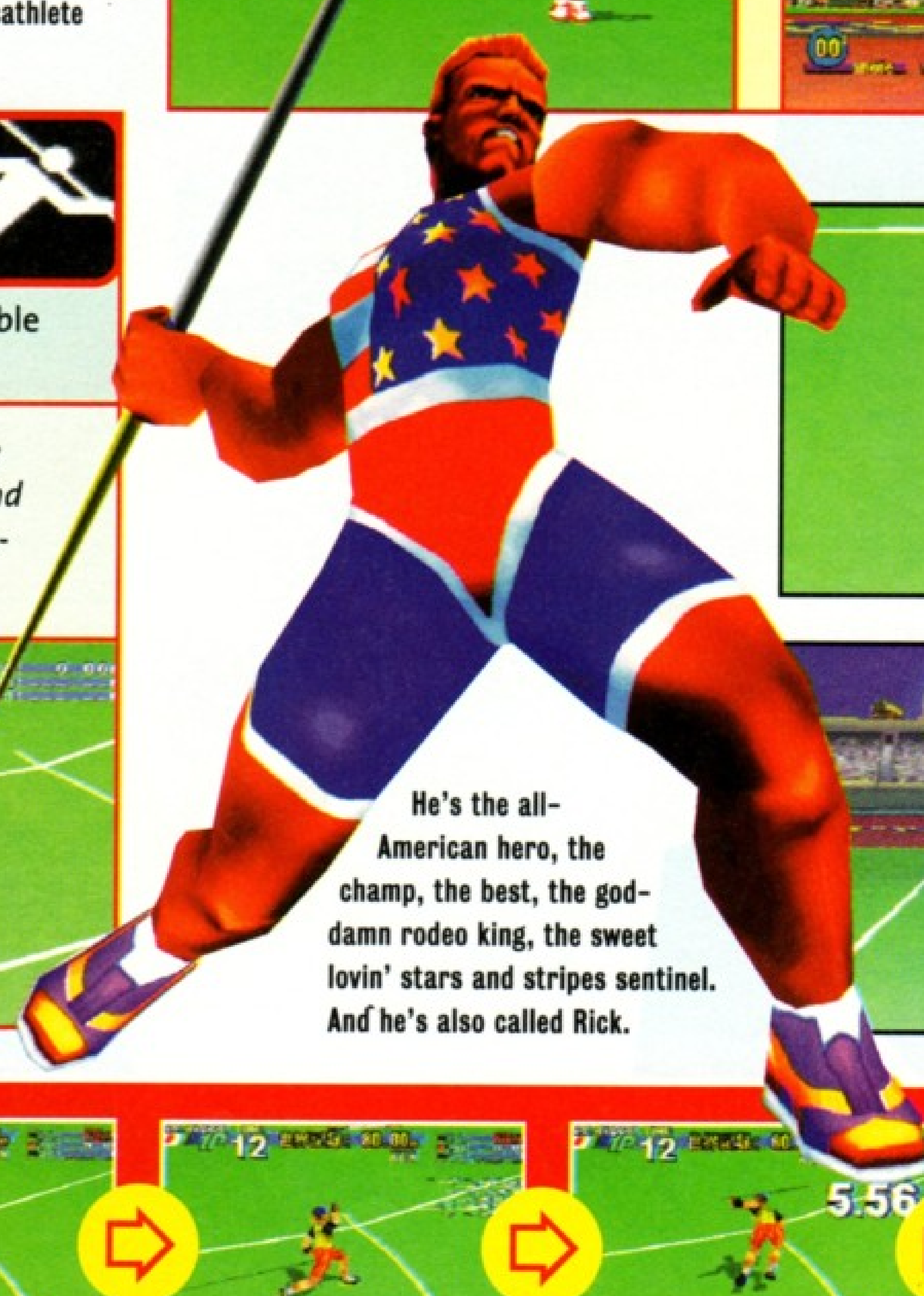
JAVELIN

The British for some strange reason have always been pretty good at this event. It involves loads of arm power but also a steady run up and an ability to whip the arm forward as fast as possible like a catapult.

Technique: *After getting a bit of a run up together, acquiring distance with the javelin is largely a matter of finding the perfect 45° angle, and some button bashing to maintain the flight of your spear. But be careful not to over step the line when the javelin is released.*











He's the all-American hero, the champ, the best, the god-damn rodeo king, the sweet lovin' stars and stripes sentinel. And he's also called Rick.













BORN TO RUN...OR JUMP, OR THROW

There are eight competitors in Athlete Kings and each of them is classified as either an allrounder, a thrower, a jumper or a sprinter. This doesn't mean of course that if a sprinter is faced with a javelin they'll try and use it as a piece of out-sized cutlery, but rather that sprinting is the kind of event they tend to excel at. Some of you are no doubt keen to point out that there are three women in the game even though women don't do the decathlete but the pentathlete. Well, this is a computer game after all, so a little poetic license is no big deal.





Victory in the 400 metres for Jamaica's Femi Kadiena. Like Ellen, sprinting is her forte, something which also makes her really good at the long jump as well, just like Carl Lewis.







Who'd be a pole vaulter eh? Oh yea, pole vaulters I suppose.



That's right sister, get that hurdle spot on! Remember, scrape it but don't let it fall ok?

POLE VAULT

This has to be just about the scarriest event in athletics, as well as one of the most gymnastic. Players need to collect enough pace to get a good bend in the bar when it hits the box, and awesome upper-body strength to lift themselves up and over the bar.

Technique: *Pole Vault is on a par with high jump in terms of the complication of the technique. After collecting a bit of pace on the runway, perfect timing is necessary to get the pole in the box.*







FINGERS ON THE BUTTONS

One of the most notorious aspects of a game like Athlete Kings is the irreverent button bashing it involves, eventually destroying many a joypad and leaving horrible scabs on your finger. It's also the time when all of those weird and wonderful techniques begin to reveal themselves. The 'finger gallop' for example, where the player uses their middle and forefinger like a pair of legs, or the 'electro stutter', where the player cradles the pad between their knees and tries to make their fingers vibrate as much as possible. Be ready for lots of innovations as well, like people tapping up their forefinger so as to avoid too much chaffing when they're furiously rubbing at the buttons.



Kindergarten KUNG-FU!

With the supercool likes of Sonic Fighters and Fighting Vipers busting their way onto Saturn in the near future, what place is there for the weird child of the pack – Virtua Fighter Kids? Its makers, AM2, say it's better than Virtua Fighter 2, but are they the ones with the swollen heads? "No way!" cries water-on-the brain victim TOM GUISE, "Big heads rule!"

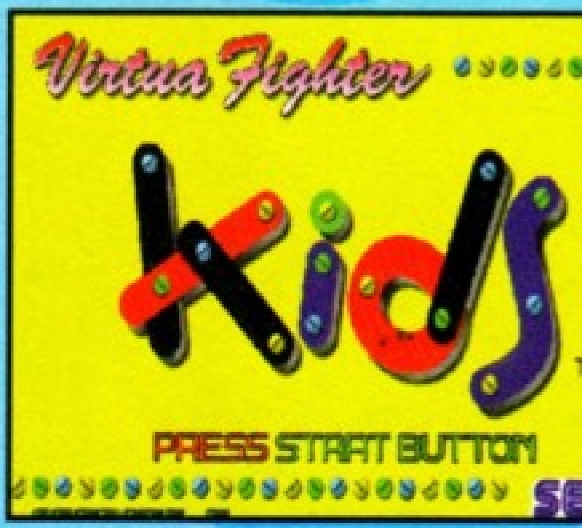








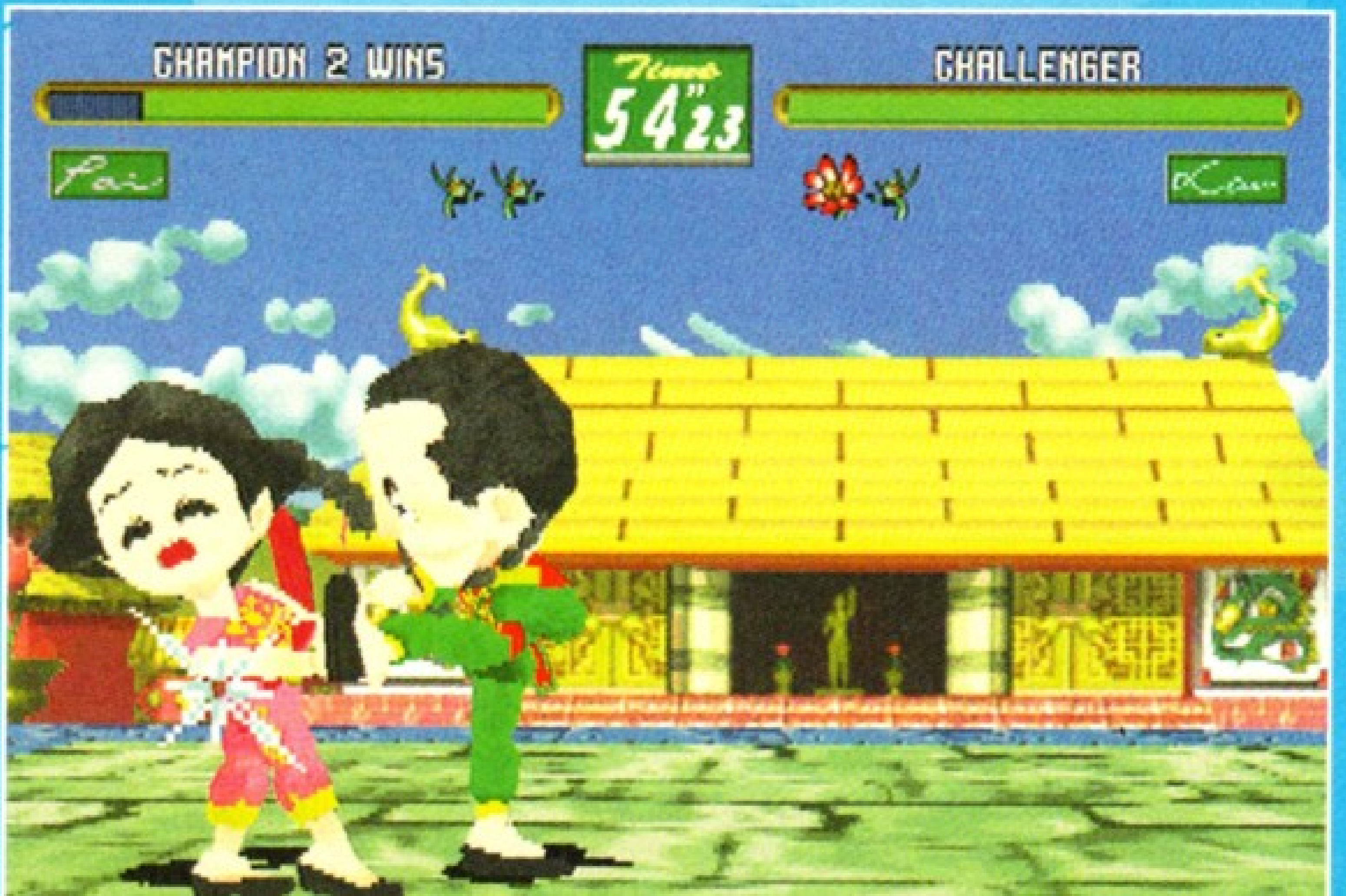
"A speed battle game far better than Virtua Fighter 2!"

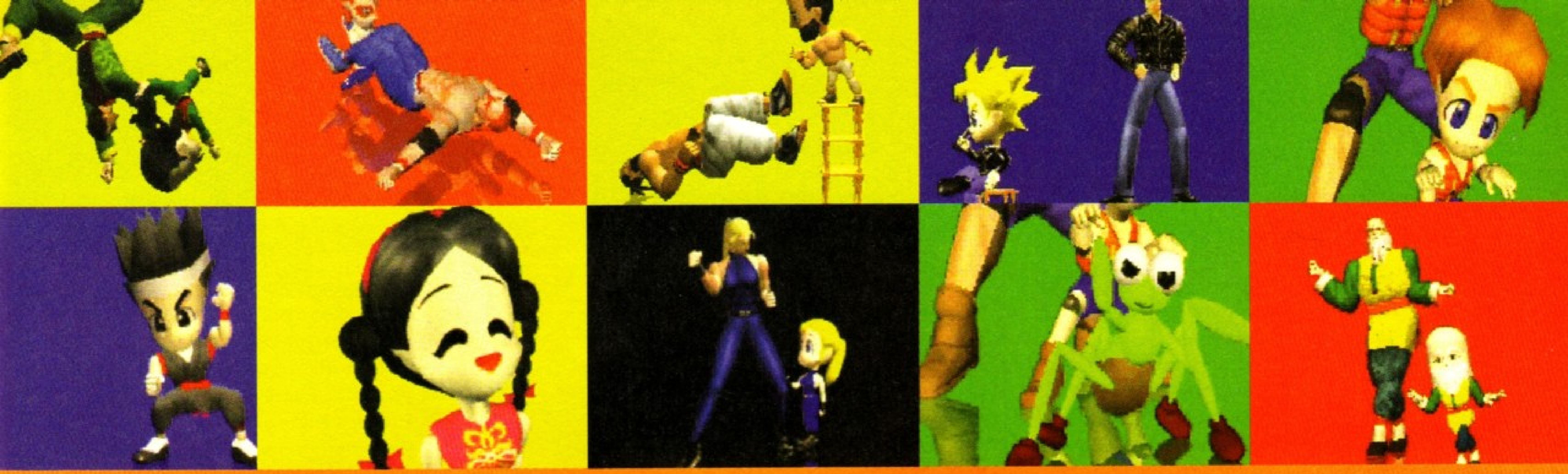


That's what AM2 say of their bizarro Kids coin-op. And, considering they ARE the creators of the legendary VF2 – as well as being responsible for the aforementioned hot favourites, Fighting Vipers and Sonic Fighters – and, moreover, were the inventors of the whole 3D fighting game concept itself, they just might have some clue what they're talking about!

But you'd be excused for questioning what makes VF Kids so special. From the screenshots, and even on the surface, it seems to be nothing more than VF2 with big heads. As an arcade game, it might not tempt you delve any further. But this game was designed for the ST-V (Saturn-dedicated) arcade board. And, true to it's nature, it's heading fully-(de)formed to Sega's superconsole!

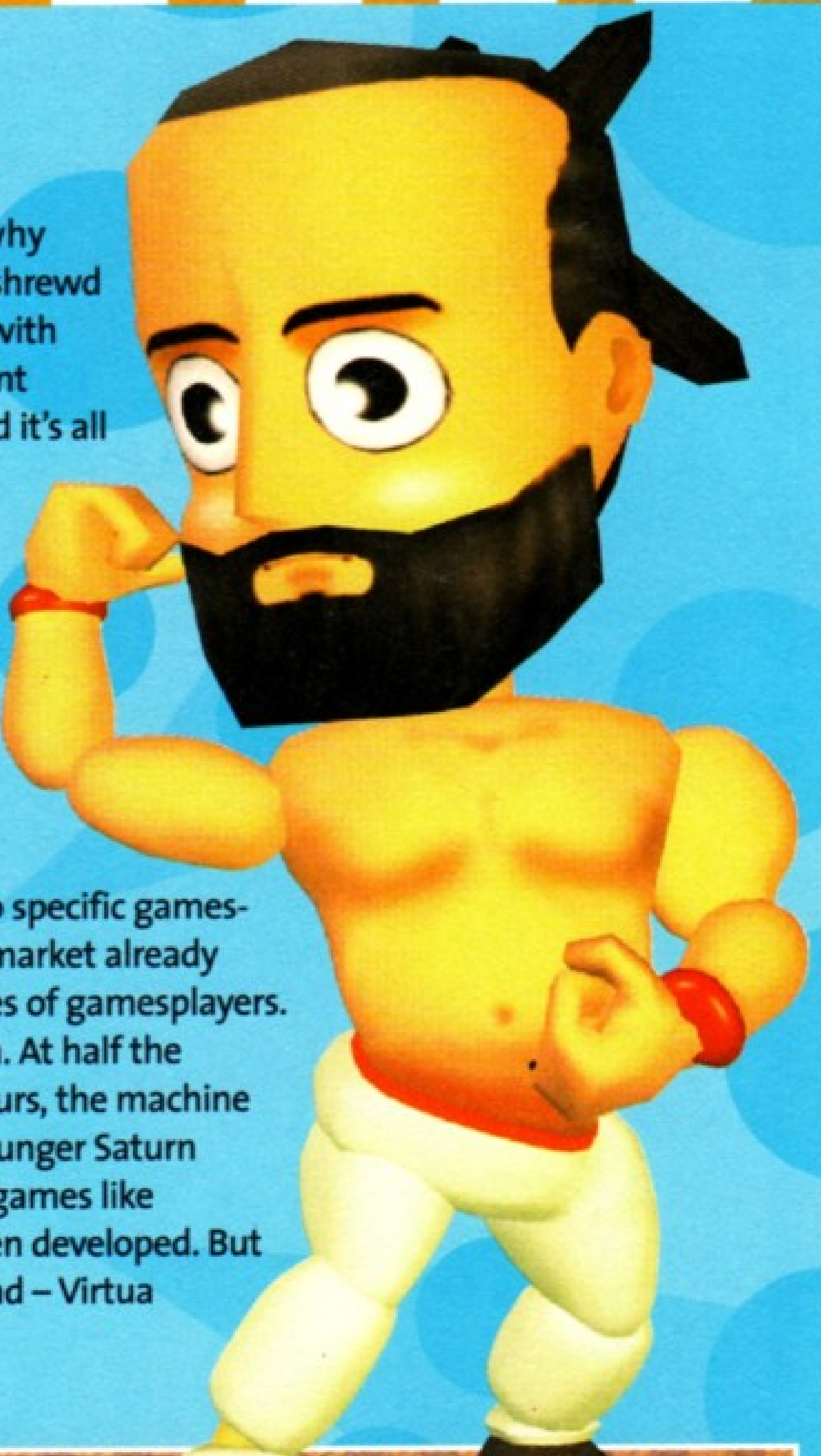






One of the coolest additions to the Saturn conversion of Virtua Fighter 2 was the brilliant FMV intro. VF Kids features the same treat, only this time the intro is completely mad. Unlike what we were expecting (ie. normal Virtua Fighters morphing into kids) the intro casts the 'Kids' almost as mischievous little trolls. Each one appears with their respective adult counterpart, and they proceed to beat each other up. All except the Shuns, who just dance drunkenly. Particularly amusing is little Jeffry using a stool to help him head-butt his 'dad'. And Jacky slapping his little brother down is entertaining too!

THE 'BIG' PICTURE!



Before delving into what makes VF Kids different from its famous adult brother, it's first worth explaining exactly why Sega have created the game at all. And the answer lies in shrewd marketing. While the Saturn might be in tough competition with the PlayStation here in the UK, over in Japan it's a very different situation. In short, the Saturn is creaming the PlayStation. And it's all thanks to Virtua Fighter and VF2!

Over there, AM2's fighting game series is granted almost godlike status. Even now, arcades are filled with more VF2 machines than any other game! The release of near-perfect conversions on Saturn, sold the machine almost single-handed! As a result, most Japanese programmers developing two-player versus-type games, choose Saturn instinctively, purely because they know their core gamesplayers already own the machine.

The problem is, fighting games in general only appeal to specific gamesplayers. Mainly, 15 to 25 year old males. With this area of the market already cornered, Sega Of Japan now intend on drawing in other types of gamesplayers. The first move was the introduction of the white Flash Saturn. At half the Saturn's original launch price, and in more cosmopolitan colours, the machine flew off the shelves on release. The number of female and younger Saturn gamers has increased dramatically. To cater for this upsurge, games like Rockman X2 (Megaman) and the upcoming NiGHTS have been developed. But SOJ also want to expand the appeal of the Saturn's main brand – Virtua Fighter. And that's where the VF Kids fit in!



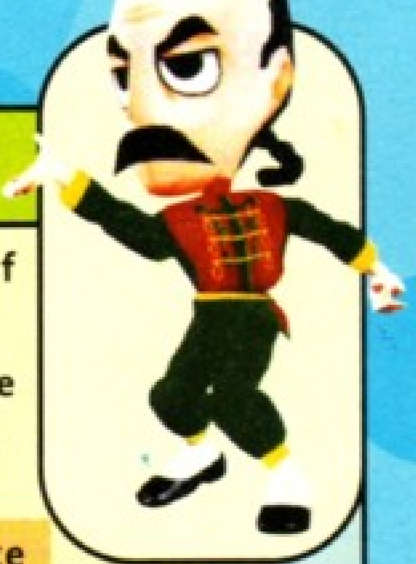
The arcade intro is in there too. Also, when you complete the game, AM2 say they've included two-minute FMV endings for each character. We've yet to see them though.





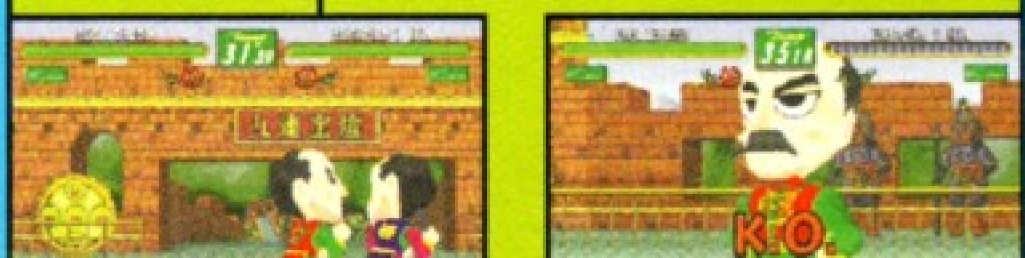


LAU CHAN



The no-nonsense Chinese chef somehow manages to keep his dignity, even with a head the size of a pumpkin. Although his squeaky chipmunk voice does lower the tone somewhat. Unlike his more cheery colleagues, little Lau doesn't smile an awful lot, only really pulling faces when hit. To get a good replay with this guy, you need to finish a floating-punch combo with a spinning roundhouse! Stamping on a floored opponent's big-head is also good for a laugh!

AGE: 56	SEX: M	BLOOD TYPE: B	
NATIONALITY:	CHINESE	HEIGHT:	6ft
BIRTHDAY:	2/10/40	WEIGHT:	12 stone
FIGHTING STYLE	KOEN-KEN KUNG-FU		
OCCUPATION	COOK		
HOBBY	CHINESE POETRY		



LION RAFALE



Considering he's only a teenager in VF2, being turned into a Kid doesn't affect Lion that much. His Preying Mantis dodging does seem slightly different due to the extra quantity of head he possesses. Most impressive of all though, is his facial claw attack. Leaping onto an opponents massive head looks brilliant, and is more effective than ever! All the more impressive because you get multiple replays of the move, when successfully pulled off.

AGE: 17	SEX: M	BLOOD TYPE: AB	
NATIONALITY:	FRENCH	HEIGHT:	5ft 10
BIRTHDAY:	24/12/79	WEIGHT:	10 stone
FIGHTING STYLE	TOUROU-KEN PREYING MANTIS		
OCCUPATION	HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT		
HOBBY	SKATEBOARDING		



JACKY BRYANT



The cool kid of VF2 keeps all his savvy even in child form. It's clear a lot of extra effort was required to reproduce Jacky's hair in super-deformed form. His hair spikes are just huge. Jacky seems able to string more moves into combos now, but his big head has lowered the range of his drop attack. His flashy repertoire also makes for plenty of replays. His six-hit lightning kick and double-height roundhouse being a couple of examples. His jacket flame logo is cute now too.

AGE: 26	SEX: M	BLOOD TYPE: A
NATIONALITY: AMERICAN		HEIGHT: 5st 11
BIRTHDAY: 28/8/70		WEIGHT: 12 stone

FIGHTING STYLE	JEET DUNE DO
OCCUPATION	INDY CAR RACER
HOBBY	TRAINING







Wolf's 'giant swing' is an excellent example of the new camera angles employed in VF Kids.
The opponent's head is so big though, that Wolf can only drag it on the floor!

AKIRA YUKI



He may squeak "Ora ora ora" in a tiny voice, but Akira is no less the martial arts master. And although he's cute looking, Akira still pulls angry expressions. Particularly amusing is Akira's stage. Previously modelled on the actual temple where his fighting style was invented, the stage has been sacrilegiously defaced with the lion statue now turned into a comedy pink animal. There's also pictures of leaping rabbits dotted about the background.

AGE: 28	SEX: M	BLOOD TYPE: 0
NATIONALITY: JAPANESE		HEIGHT: 6ft 2
BIRTHDAY: 23/9/68		WEIGHT: 14 stone

FIGHTING STYLE	HAKKYOKU-KEN
OCCUPATION	KUNG-FU TEACHER
HOBBY	KUNG-FU







As with VF2, Ranking Mode is just one of the options.



Up, up and away!





They pull cute faces when selected.

CHILD'S PLAY!



Considering VF2 is possibly the most intricate beat 'em up ever made, it might seem like a strange game to push to a younger audience. But in fact, the Virtua Fighter combat system has always been intended for gamers of all ages. When Yu Suzuki was originally thinking up the first VF, he wanted a control method that, in his own words "even a five-year old would be able to enjoy". The result was the three-button Guard-Punch-Kick system. From this, research was carried out to see what the most natural button combination were. These were then used to produced VF's super-instinctive gameplay.

Admittedly though, while basic moves such as the PPK combo are easily performed by even a novice, trickier moves (Wolf's helicopter throw or Akira's surprise exchange, for example) are somewhat tougher. For VF Kids though, AM2 have taken steps to make even these moves accessible, thanks to... the Kids' combo!



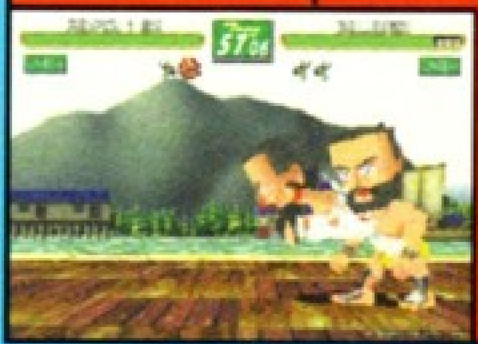
JEFFRY McWILD



The fearsome shark-fighting, pancratium master has been reduced to a tearful softy. When selected to fight, or when he wins, tears well up in his eyes. Jeffry definitely has the best remixed music. A sort of slow reggae jamboree of his old tune. There's also a big cartoon shark sticking out of the water on his stage. For a good replay, do his triple headbutt combo. All the more painful thanks to his massive forehead.

AGE: 39	SEX: M	BLOOD TYPE: A
NATIONALITY: AUSTRALIA		HEIGHT: 6ft 4
BIRTHDAY: 20/2/57		WEIGHT: 16 stone

FIGHTING STYLE	PANCRATIUM
OCCUPATION	FISHERMAN
HOBBY	REGGAE MUSIC







BOYISH CHARM!

So here's the plan. Take the superbly addictive gameplay of VF2 and package it in a game with a cuddlier image. Turning the fighters into kids is not such an unusual notion. In Japan, super-deformed (the name for this kind of treatment) characters are widely popular. Even the Street Fighters have had it happen to them. So, giving the Virtua Fighters child-like proportions makes perfect sense. More than just another big-heads cheats though, VF Kids is a very thorough image reworking. Childish versions of the backdrops, cutesier remixes of the music, and personality-enhancing facial expressions are all part of the Kids credo.

The result is a game that Sega reckon will appeal to people previously uninterested in fighting games, while still drawing in the hardcore gamer with familiar – yet even more advanced – gameplay!







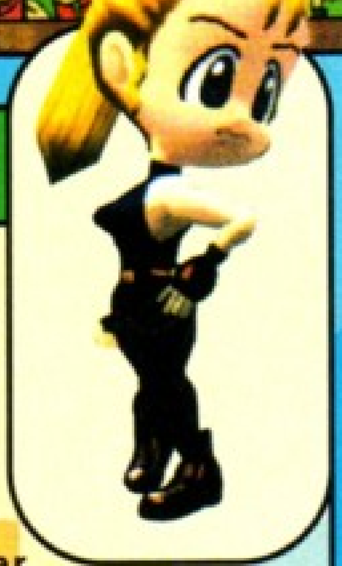
ONE KIDS' COMBO PLEASE!

A new Saturn-specific feature, Kids Mode is a handicap option that makes the likes of Autoblock in X-Men look like expert player territory. When selected, it allows players to perform normally advanced moves with staggeringly simple multiple button presses. Counter moves, complex throws – suddenly even the most inept gamesplayer can produce on-screen results that arcade masters would be impressed by. Working out how to do specific moves in Kids Mode is actually quite tricky though. You see, once you're tapping away at close quarters, moves just happen! "Yeh, I meant to do that all along, ahem."





Multiple angle replays in full-effect, Kidsters.



SARAH BRYANT

The superfast punch-kick fighter has kept all her speed and power. In fact, the extra head size of the fighters means her combos are more effective than ever. However, moves like her triple-kick have lost some of their potency, mainly because her legs are just too short! Her famous quote "Better run home to momma now!" suits the game more than ever! It's all the more cheeky too, because of the cute smiley expression on her face.

AGE: 23	SEX: F	BLOOD TYPE: AB
NATIONALITY: AMERICAN		HEIGHT: 5ft 7
BIRTHDAY: 4/7/73		WEIGHT: 8 stone

FIGHTING STYLE	JEET KUNE DO
OCCUPATION	COLLEGE STUDENT
HOBBY	SKY DIVING





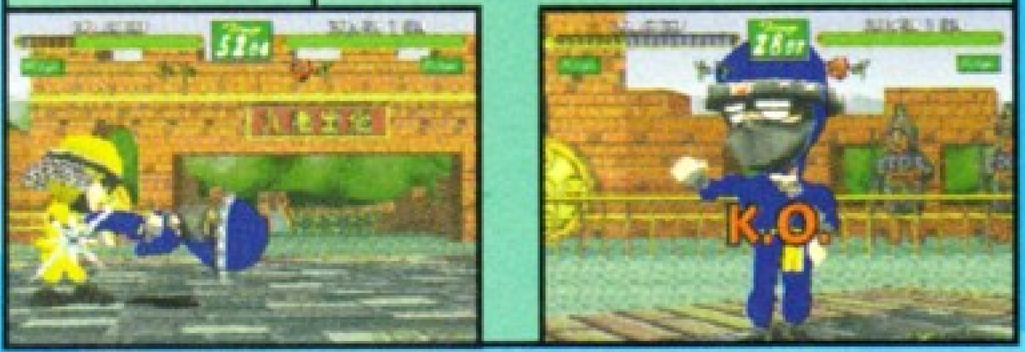


KAGEMARU

Definitely one of the most popular Kids version fighters. The silent, deadly ninja has been transformed into a evil little pixie – complete with fangs. He grins wickedly when he wins, or when a new challenger enters a fight. And his head-butt drop attack looks more insane than ever. What's more, his head-ring is huge when it's knocked onto the floor! Flipping a big-headed opponent into the air is superb, but it's his footdive that produces a replay.

AGE: 26	SEX: M	BLOOD TYPE: B
NATIONALITY: JAPANESE		HEIGHT: 5ft 10
BIRTHDAY: 6/6/70		WEIGHT: 9 stone

FIGHTING STYLE	JU-JUTSU
OCCUPATION	NINJA
HOBBY	MAHJONG





More than just new graphics plastered over old motion-capture, VF Kids features new movement.
As seen here when the big-headed fighters duck backwards when blocking.



Little comic touches have been included, such as smoke coming off the running fighters feet. Spit also comes out of their mouths when they're hit. It's not disgusting though. Just big cartoon droplets.

SHOWCASE



PUPPY POWER!

Virtua Fighter Kids is a subtle, but definite redefinement of the VF2 game engine. For true VF fans, we reckon it's essential to have. Your more average VF2 owning games-player though, may not find enough reason to own such a similar title. Nonetheless, we reckon Sega Europe should definitely bring this game out over here. Perhaps even bring out a VF2 -VF Kids double-pack and use it to relaunch VF2 all over again. Who knows, with the irresistible Kids on their side, we could have a Virtua Fighter phenomenon to match that of Japan.

HERE COMES A NEW CHALLENGER

Although there's a home-specific two-player option, VF Kids is best played in one-player arcade mode. For one reason – the 'Challenger Comes' flash. When a new player enters, the fighters currently on-screen look around startled. Even if they're floored. It really is constantly funny!







Double Wolf-action on the Sarah's stormy arena. Of all the new, cute arenas, this is probably the least humourous. It's still jolly though.



Another example of VF Kids' new angles. A panned view such as this, adds more drama to the move.

WOLF HAWKFIELD



The coolest thing about Wolf, is that his ice stage now features the surrounding fence. Something that was noticeably absent from Saturn VF2. It also features loads of little snowmen. Wolf's throwing and body slamming moves are more dramatic than ever. Especially his spinning throw. The camera zooms around him in a mad fashion! And pulling off a leg-counter looks brilliant in big-headed style. Obviously AM2 think so, cos they give you a replay of it!

AGE:	31	SEX:	M	BLOOD TYPE:	0
NATIONALITY:	CANADIAN			HEIGHT:	6ft 3
BIRTHDAY:	8/2/66			WEIGHT:	15 stone

FIGHTING STYLE	PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING
OCCUPATION	WRESTLER
HOBBY	KARAOKE





SHUN DI



The drunken master is now just a sozzled baby. Nonetheless, his Top Deck shandy still gets him tanked up enough to perform all his staggering moves. His Drunken Fist attack, where he rotates around an opponent, looks bizarre due to the lolling heads. Strangest bit of the whole game is Shun's handstand. His head is too big for his hands to reach the ground, so his head seems to strangely pass through the floor! It's not glitchy though, just weird!

AGE:	84	SEX:	M	BLOOD TYPE:	0
NATIONALITY:	CHINESE			HEIGHT:	5ft 6
BIRTHDAY:	2/1/12			WEIGHT:	11 stone

FIGHTING STYLE	DRUNK KUNG-FU
OCCUPATION	HERBAL DOCTOR
HOBBY	DRINKING









Note Shun's new bottle. It's not a Java Tea can.



In Japan, VF Kids features product placement. Cans of Java Tea are held by Jacky and Shun, and Pai even has her own Energen drink stage. Because they've been removed in the UK, there isn't this extra stage. Jacky and Sarah's Chicago stage is also gone because it has a Java Tea billboard in it.



The Java Tea advertising in Japanese VF Kids is part of a huge campaign. It even has a Java Tea loading screen between rounds. Not here though. See, Jacky isn't drinking any!







MOVE OVER OLD-TIMER

VF Kids isn't just a surface rehash of VF2 with a junior button-mashing option though. As you'd expect from AM2, they've taken this opportunity to refine the gameplay, making it more dynamic than ever. For starters, the game is a full 20% faster than VF2, and it shows. The speed at which combos are launched on opponents is staggering, emphasised by the more punchy impact sounds (they sound closer to VF than VF2).



What's more, the big-heads prove to be more than just a cosmetic addition. These extra large targets, coupled with the extra speed, have created new combos. Extra hits can now be strung into moves, making for even more impressive fights. What's more, when low-blocking, the fighters now sway backwards. Such is the size of their craniums, they actually need to dodge hits!

These over-ripe Papaya heads also add centrifugal force to the fighters. Most notably when KO'd. Finish off an opponent with certain combos, and the final hit sends them across nearly the whole distance of the ring. Sometimes they even skid further when they land.

Other moves are considered worthy of replay. Taking a leaf out of Fighting Vipers book, when a special attack is successfully implemented, multiple-view replays are shown. Likewise, new angles are employed throughout fights. During Wolf's spinning throw, for example, the camera stays fixed on Wolf's face, while the backdrop zooms around. Added drama is definitely part of the Kids package!



Wolf prepares to fight himself. Bizarrey, the new caricature looks just like Ed Lomas, the little squirt who does our tips.



The all-new, hyper-cute Name Entry screen.







DURAL

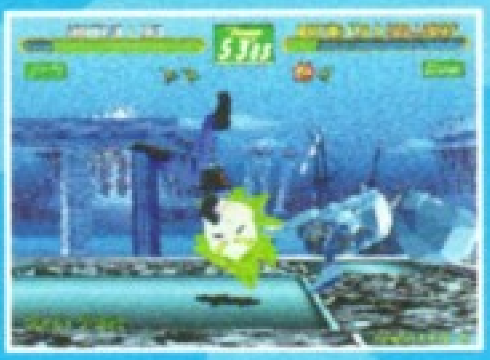
The robot J6 syndicate boss has more personality than before. In fact, she has the personality of all the fighters whose moves she uses. Her face changes to look similar to theirs, as she does their attacks!. Also, her eyes go angrily red when she's attacked. But she smiles quite nicely when she wins, so that's okay. Although accessing her in the arcades is a secret, on Saturn it's exactly the same as in VF2 (Down-Up-Right-A-Left. For a gold version – Down-Up-Left-A-Right).

AGE:	4	SEX:	?	BLOOD TYPE:	?
NATIONALITY:	TROLL			HEIGHT:	6ft
BIRTHDAY:	EVERY DAY			WEIGHT:	4 TONS
FIGHTING STYLE	GENTLEMAN'S RAW WRESTLING				
OCCUPATION	COUNTRY AND WESTERN STAR				
HOBBY	BADMINTON				






Impact marks now appear to emphasise the power of the attacks. Also, a great deal of attention has been spent on the fighters' expressions. They all look very pained when hit. Don't worry though, they're equally happy when they win.








PAI CHAN

Lau's unruly daughter looks more childish than ever. Even her embroidered jacket logo (which was previously a cockerel) is now a cartoon chicken. As with Kage, when Pai loses her hat or hairband, it looks simply huge as it lies on the floor. Moves like her leaping double-kick produce an impressive replay. But her annoying one-tap kick – which skillesly flips opponents up – is more annoying than ever, thanks to the ease at which it catches the opponent's head.

AGE:	19	SEX:	F	BLOOD TYPE:	0
NATIONALITY:	CHINESE			HEIGHT:	5ft 9
BIRTHDAY:	17/5/75			WEIGHT:	9 stone
FIGHTING STYLE	ENSEI-KEN				
OCCUPATION	ACTION STAR				
HOBBY	DANCING				







SEGA

THE ARCADE WINNERS

SEGA'S reputation has been forged in one of the competitive markets in the world... the arcades! Though they've always managed to bring their arcade hits home and let the family have a piece of the action, from their early licenses on popular early 80's consoles (see last month), right up to the present day Saturn. Many of the games shown on these pages, such as Rampage or Alien Syndrome, contain such original ideas (that haven't been re-used) we're surprised they haven't been updated for the Saturn. Maybe there's hope for them in the Sega Ages series...



NAME: AFTER BURNER
YEAR: 1986 **SPECIAL FEATURES ⬇**
AN AWESOME HYDRAULIC CABINET THROWING YOU RIGHT INTO THE ACTION.
COMMENTS: More of a white knuckle ride than a game, this is still ace, especially in the R360 cabinet.



NAME: GUNBLADE
YEAR: 1996 **SPECIAL FEATURES ⬇**
FRONT MOUNTED RECOILING LIGHT GUNS AND A GROOVY LICENSE.
COMMENTS: Based on the famous and classic shoot 'em up Thunderblade, Gunblade is a pseudo-sequel which has you gunning from the chopper instead of piloting it. Not massively famous but pretty good all the same.

NAME: QUARTET
YEAR: 1985 **SPECIAL FEATURES ⬇**
ONE OF THE FIRST SIMULTANEOUS FOUR-PLAYER GAMES DEVELOPED.
COMMENTS: A team of four mercenaries take on this brilliant horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up.





NAME: DESERT TANK
YEAR: 1994 **SPECIAL FEATURES ⬇**
ANOTHER OF SEGA'S SUPERB HYDRAULIC CABINETS – THIS ONE'S A TWO-SEATER.
COMMENTS: Surprisingly Desert Tank didn't really take off that well. It's a grade A tank blaster well worth a pop.



NAME: RAIL CHASE 2
YEAR: 1992 **SPECIAL FEATURES ⬇**
SEGA AREN'T AFRAID TO TRADE ON THE INNOVATION OF THEIR PREVIOUS GAMES.
COMMENTS: Utilising the same cabinet technology as the original Rail Chase, this sequel was equally amusing. Not one you'll ever see coming to Saturn as the cabinet was such an intrinsic part of its appeal and gameplay.

NAME: SUPER MONACO GP
YEAR: 1990 **SPECIAL FEATURES ⬇**
A HYDRAULIC CABINET AND ABSOLUTELY AMAZING (FOR THE TIME) GRAPHICS.
COMMENTS: One of the titles which made Sega an arcade force in the Megadrive years was this spectacular racer, which was never topped until the advent of Virtua Racing. Which was also by Sega.





NAME: DAYTONA GP
YEAR: 1994 **SPECIAL FEATURES**
A CUT-DOWN VERSION OF THE DAYTONA CABINET FOR ONE-PLAYER. SMALLER.
COMMENTS: GP cabinets are designed for arcades too small or poor to afford the four-up version, although four can be linked.





NAME: VIRTUA FIGHTER 2
YEAR: 1995 **SPECIAL FEATURES**
BACK-TO-BACK HEAD-TO-HEAD CABINETS AND THE BEST GAME EVER. MAYBE.
COMMENTS: The ultimate two-player fighting game which stunned punters with its incredible graphics. Just amazing. Well done, there.

NAME: DAYTONA USA
YEAR: 1994 **SPECIAL FEATURES**
FOUR-PLAYER LINKED HYDRAULIC CABINETS, AND EVEN A SECRET CHEAT MODE!
COMMENTS: Designed with group play in mind, Daytona was the unofficial follow-up to Virtua Racing, and the texture mapping and running commentary made it even more breathtaking.



NAME: ENDURO RACER
YEAR: 1987 **SPECIAL FEATURES**
CABINET-MOUNTED BIKE YOU HAD TO WHEELIE YOURSELF TO GO OVER JUMPS.
COMMENTS: Cashing in on the BMX craze, this was an awesome game with a cool novelty cabinet. Small children had real difficulty beating those jumps, though. I know. I was one. I couldn't wheelie the bike. It was too heavy.

NAME: GALAXY FORCE
YEAR: 1988 **SPECIAL FEATURES**
HYDRAULIC CABINET DISGUISED AS CHROMATIC MODERN SURREALIST ART.
COMMENTS: Looking back, Galaxy Force wasn't perhaps the bestest shooter in the world. But it was one of the first with a Hydro-Cab (or whatever their fancy industry name is). Probably about 20p a go now.



NAME: RAMPAGE
YEAR: 1987 **SPECIAL FEATURES**
THREE PLAYERS, NO DISCERNIBLE POINT EXCEPT DESTRUCTION.
COMMENTS: Smash down buildings, eat soldiers, mash everything with three giant monsters on the rampage. Let down by a lack of variety, but ripe for a re-vamp.



NAME: HANG ON
YEAR: 1985 **SPECIAL FEATURES**
LIFE-SIZE SIT-ON BIKE CABINET THE PLAYER PHYSICALLY "BANKS" TO TURN. MONITOR ABOVE HANDLEBARS.
COMMENTS: Everyone went loopy for Hang-On, from little kids who could hardly move the thing to real-life beardy bikers. Follow-up Super Hang-On had a smaller, looser bike so wee players could actually steer the thing. A very imaginative cabinet.







NAME: AS-1
YEAR: 1994 **SPECIAL FEATURES**

THE AS-1 IS A SPECIAL EFFECT. A HYDRAULIC CINEMA WITH NOT MUCH LEG ROOM.

COMMENTS: Limited interaction (only two buttons and no joystick) but the AS-1 is certainly a thrilling experience. Computer generated "movies" are displayed on a big screen at the front, whilst players are thrown around violently.



NAME: VIRTUA COP
YEAR: 1994 **SPECIAL FEATURES**

THE REBIRTH OF THE GUN GAME. VIRTUA GRAPHICS ENABLE MORE REALISM.

COMMENTS: Before VC the idea of pin-point shooting an opponent or scrolling around a level was pretty ludicrous. All of a sudden the possibilities for gun games are expanded and the genre is suddenly cool again. Hurrah!

NAME: STAR WARS
YEAR: 1994 **SPECIAL FEATURES**

AMAZING LICENSE, WEIRD TWO-PLAYER MODE, TIE FIGHTERS, ADMIRAL ACKBAR.

COMMENTS: Superb Virtua spin-off which casts you as an X-Wing pilot. Two-player version has one as pilot and one as gunner. The graphics are superb (especially the Death Star) and it stars Admiral Ackbar. Brrrrriiiiillllliiiiaaannnt.



NAME: VIRTUA RACING
YEAR: 1993 **SPECIAL FEATURES**

THE GAME WHICH KICK-STARTED THE WHOLE 3D POLYGON CRAZE.

COMMENTS: Eeh, I remember when VR first appeared and we all traipsed down the arcade to stand there slack-mouthed for a half-hour before we got a go. And then we nearly died. Four – FOUR – views. Polygons. Mummy.



NAME: VIRTUAL ON
YEAR: 1996 **SPECIAL FEATURES**

INCREDIBLE VISUALS, AND A REFRESHING BLEND OF SHOOTING AND FISTING.

COMMENTS: Despite having a weirdy name Virtual On is one of Sega's most accomplished game designs. It's a robot battle game fought over huge arenas with guns and martial arts. And it's blimmin' wicked.

NAME: OUT RUN
YEAR: 1987 **SPECIAL FEATURES**

FERRARI-SHAPED HYDRAULIC CABINET WITH BIG SPEAKERS.

COMMENTS: One of the most famous games ever. Cool cabinet not pictured.





NAME: THUNDER BLADE
YEAR: 1988 **SPECIAL FEATURES**

SWIVELLY NON-HYDRAULIC CABINET. LEVELS SWITCH PERSPECTIVE, TOP-DOWN TO REAR VIEW.

COMMENTS: Thunder Blade blew everyone away on launch thanks to its superb graphics (which now look crap) and novelty cabinet, which had the player steer left and right by swivelling the seat. Brings new meaning to the phrase "sit and swivel". Was very good at the time.



NAME: SEGA RALLY
YEAR: 1995 **SPECIAL FEATURES**

ULTRA-ACE GRAPHICS, LINKED HYDRAULIC CABINETS AND ALL-ROUND EXCELLENCE.

COMMENTS: This is one game everyone knows about. Even if you haven't played it in the arcades, chances are you've drooled over the Saturn conversion (or the demo version we gave away on issue 3). Wondrous and lovely.



NAME: MANX TT

YEAR: 1990 **SPECIAL FEATURES**

REFINED HANG-ON STYLE BIKES THAT LOOK LIKE NINJA MOTORCYCLES FROM 2138.

COMMENTS: One of, if not the, most thrilling racers of all time. Manx TT, on its way to Saturn NOW AS WE SPEAK, is another game which entices non-gamers into the arcades. And so it should, sporting such beezer graphics and moving at the incredible pace at which it does. Lord knows what the Model 3 board racing titles will look like given how ace this is.



NAME: INDY 500

YEAR: 1996 **SPECIAL FEATURES**

NAMED AFTER FAMOUS EXPLORER DR JONES, BUT IT'S A RACE GAME.

COMMENTS: More in the spirit of Super Monaco GP than Sega Rally, this Model 2 game harks back to the good old days of Formula 1 racing. As a result it's impressively fast, and rock hard to play with manual gears. Good stuff.

NAME: SUPER MEGALO 2 | VERSUS CITY | NEW ASTRO CITY

COMMENTS: Three of Sega's blank cabinets. Super Megalo 2 is a giant screen sit-down cabinet for two players, luxurious and spacious and for big arcades only. Versus City is a back-to-back two-player cabinet designed for Virtua Fighter 2 (but compatible with anything). It facilitates head-to-head play without you being able to actually see your opponent's face. The New Astro City cabinet is a micro-thin space saver with a large screen and decent speakers.



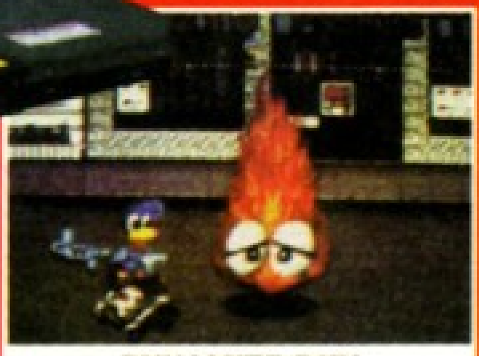
AND THERE'S MORE...

Space restricts us from showing you EVERYTHING Sega have done in depth, including Space Harrier (the first ever hydraulic cabinet in the world), the R360 (a cabinet which revolves upside down and right around the sides) and a few others of importance. But here's a shot of all the rest we could think of. But have we got them all? If you can think of one we've missed, write in to the usual address. We're offering a prize to whoever names the most.


OUTRUNNERS

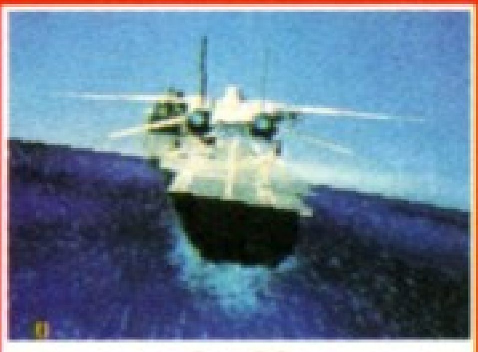

VIRTUA FIGHTER 3


VIRTUA COP 2


DYNAMITE DUX


FIGHTING VIPERS


SONIC ARCADE


G-LOC


SONIC FIGHTERS

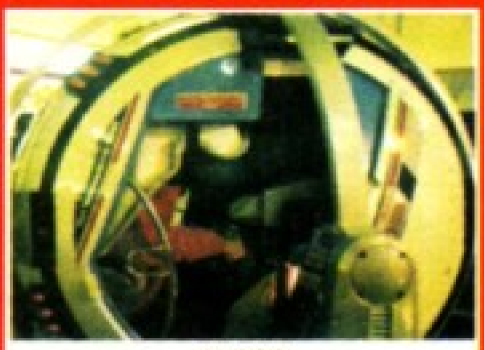

SPACE HARRIER


SKY TARGET

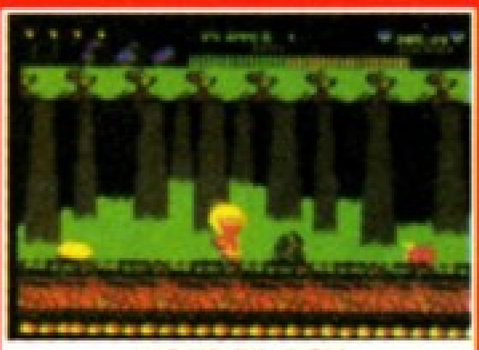

S.D.I


ALIEN STORM

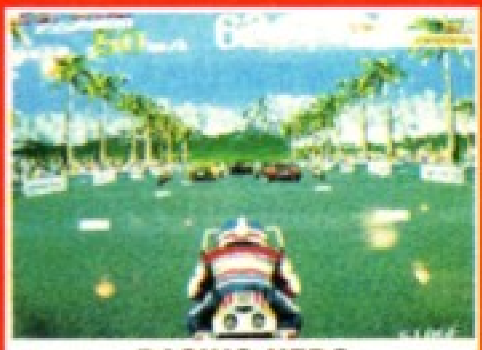

ALIEN SYNDROME


R 360


DECATHLETE

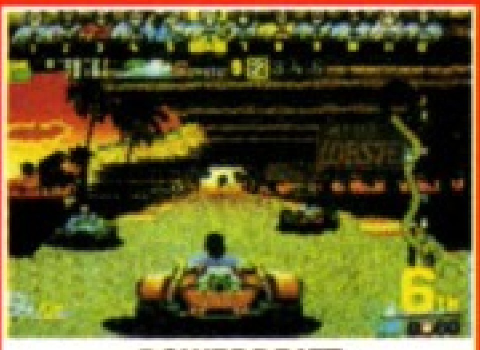

WONDER BOY

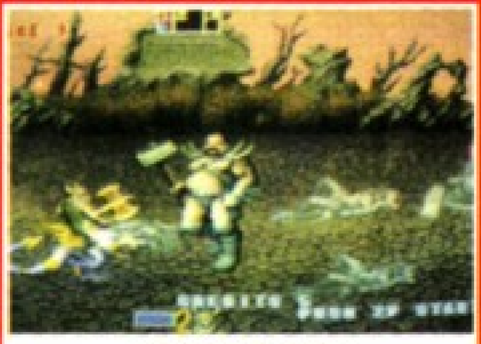

WING WARS

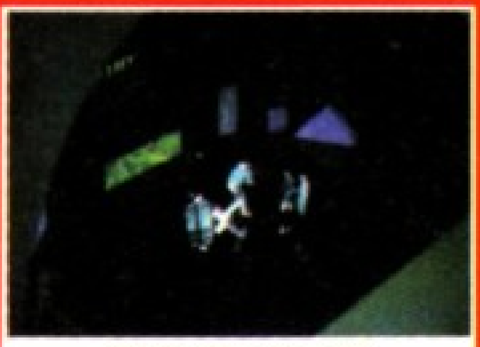

RACING HERO


RAD MOBILE


LAST BRONX

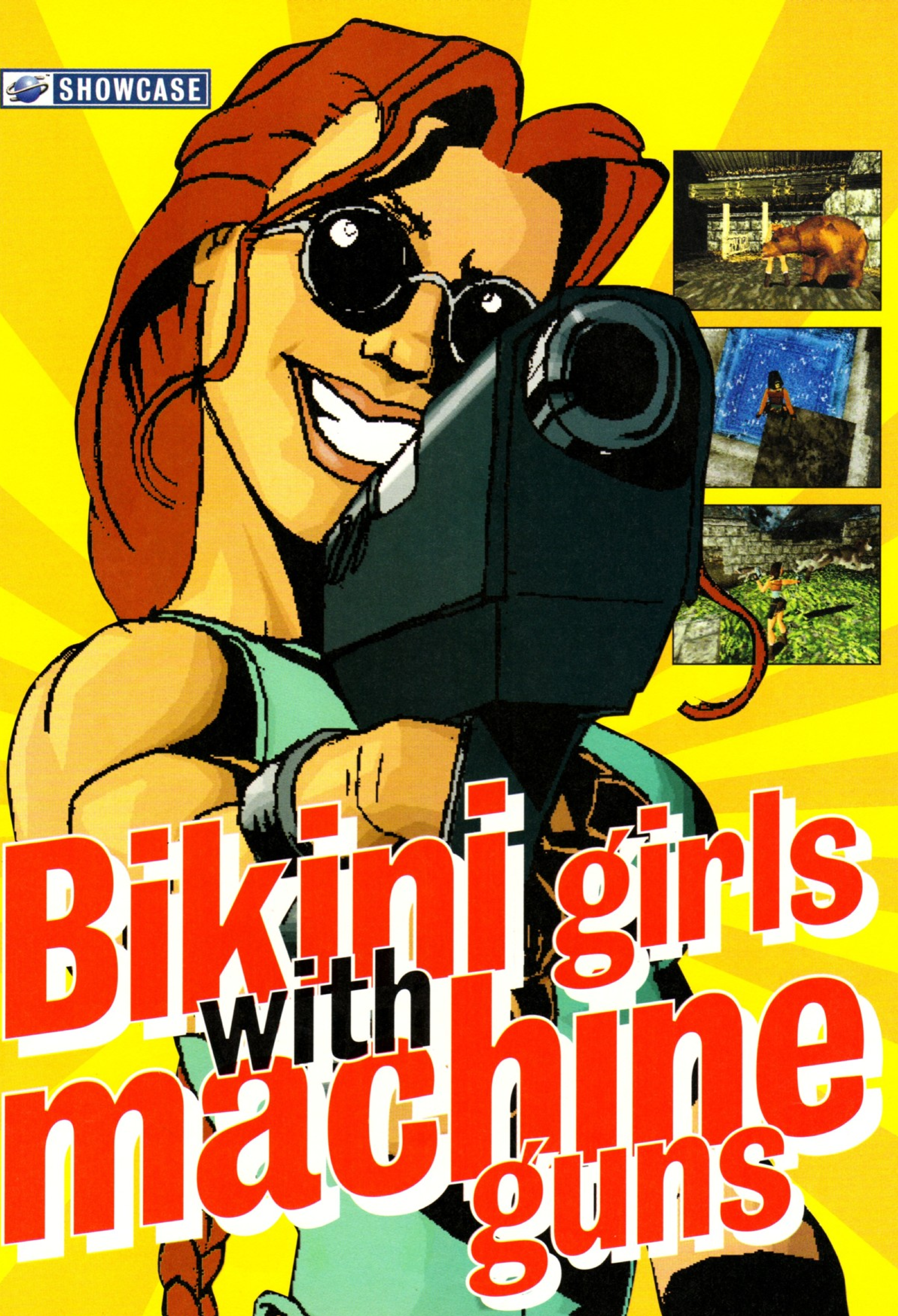

POWERDRIFT


GOLDEN AXE


TIME TRAVELLER


HANG ON

Thanks to SEGA amusements and about 30 old back issues of CVG for their help in this feature.



Bikini girls with machine guns





Core first revealed Tomb Raider at the spring ECTS and everyone was pretty gobsmacked with just how impressive it looked. Like Nights and the forthcoming Sonic X-Treme, Tomb Raider takes you into a full 360 3D environment. ROB BRIGHT enjoys the freedom.

And the legend says that the ancients preserved a special body of knowledge – a unique mystically transcendent knowledge, that was to be passed on after their empires crumbled, by the select few who had managed to initiate themselves via its sacred rituals and techniques of omni-conscious exploration. Only now, as the time of universal truth approaches can I, the last guardian of the 'Illuminati Temples of Mr. Byrite', reveal this knowledge to you, brethren of the Saturn...

...err, hang on... ummm... oh what was it?...ahh bugger, I should have written it down. Oh well, can't be helped, can't be helped. Instead I'll tell you about Tomb Raider, a game no doubt programmed by fellow 'initiates', concentrating as it does on the mystery surrounding the 'Scion', an object of ancient and unknown powers. Lara Croft is the action-woman who's been employed to retrieve it, but who has subsequently decided to go it alone after discovering that her employer's were simply using her as a pawn in a much bigger game.



With the suspense-laden plot neatly laid out, this 3D action adventure kicks off. Part puzzle, part shoot 'em up, Tomb Raider is set over four levels, each level subdividing into zones. The environments are as you'd expect – Inca caves and cities, Greek Coliseums, Egyptian temples and even an Atlantian pyramid. In each part of the game the action focuses on different aspects of the adventure, with some zones dedicated mostly to exploring or puzzle solving and others to some traditional blast 'em up chaos.

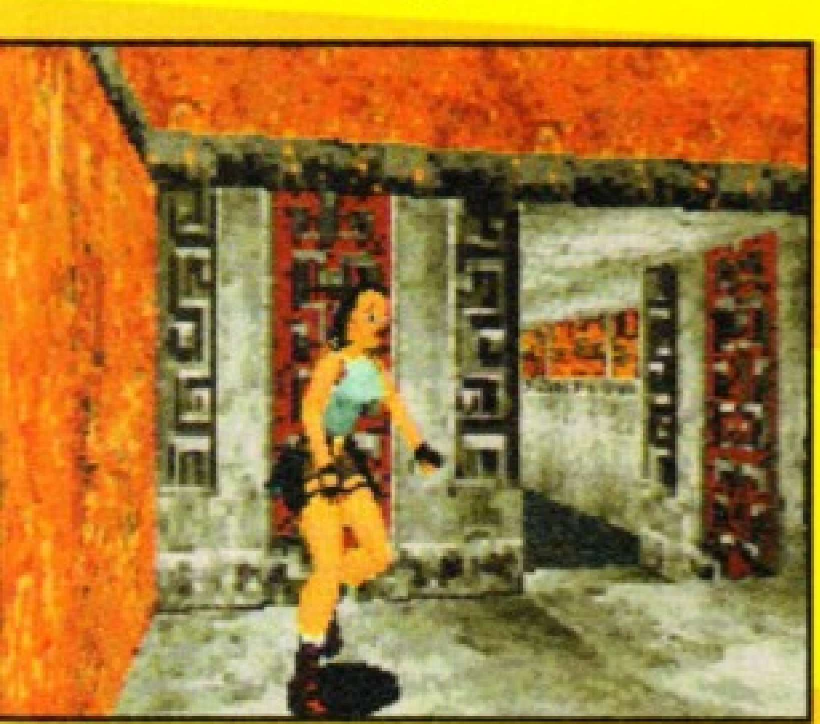




Tomb Raider is now deep in development, and as you can no doubt tell from the screenshots, it's looking very impressive indeed. A lot of time has been sent working on the finer details in an effort to really build a sense of atmosphere in the game. The use of varying camera angles, the fluid movement of the sprites and the range of things that Lara is capable of, all work to contribute towards it.

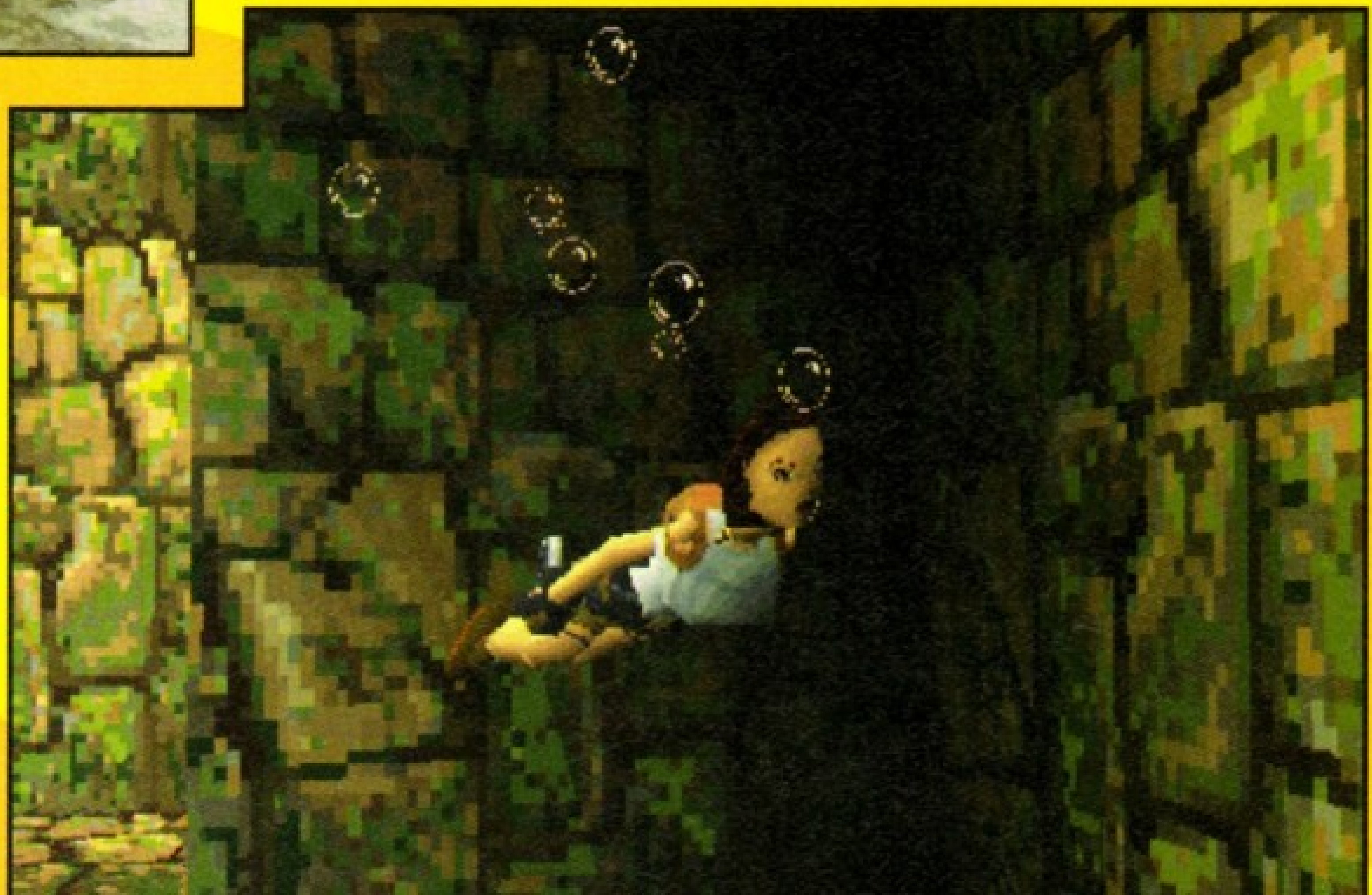
Core are working towards an October/November release for Tomb Raider, and proving all goes to plan this could be one of the big Christmas hits. We'll be keeping a eye on how things are shaping up. >>





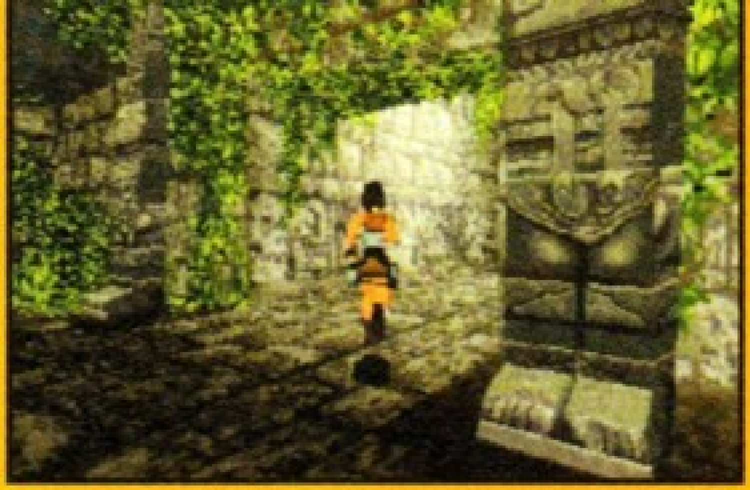


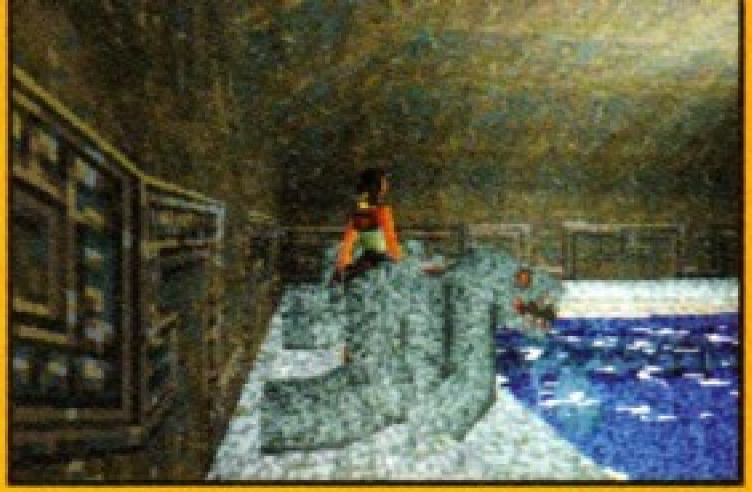




HIGH NOON

Lara starts off the game with her two pistols which have an infinite amount of ammo. She wears these in classic gunslinger fashion, one on each hip and has to press the draw button to use them. When she draws them they'll immediately lock on to the target or targets, providing it's in front rather than behind her. If there's only one target then both guns focus on that. Lara actually spends a lot of time without using her weapons, keeping her hands free to climb things or grab onto ledges if she happens to be falling.





LOST EMPIRES

There are four different levels in Tomb raiders, and each level is split into zones. The themes on each level concentrate on one particular visage of ancient culture and mythology. In the first three levels Lara is required to find the three parts of the Scion in order to gain entry to the last level. Anyway, here's an example of what you can expect...





LEVEL 1: VILCABAMBA

This is based on an ancient Inca city, and it features some of the classic architecture the South American culture was famous for, including lots of oblique temples where ritual sacrifice took place. because it's the first level, most of the action will be based around getting used to controlling Lara, so there won't be as many enemies here.







'Cry wolf, ooohh, and try not to worry now' as the great Aha said. And 'Hunting high and low' of course.

LEVEL 2: LABYRINTH

Moving on to some classical Greek/Roman architecture here, which means plenty of huge geometrically precise pillars, the imposing coliseum and lots of heroic artwork. There'll be more in the way of enemies in this level and lots of long eerie corridors. There's also the Roman baths where Lara decides to take a dip.





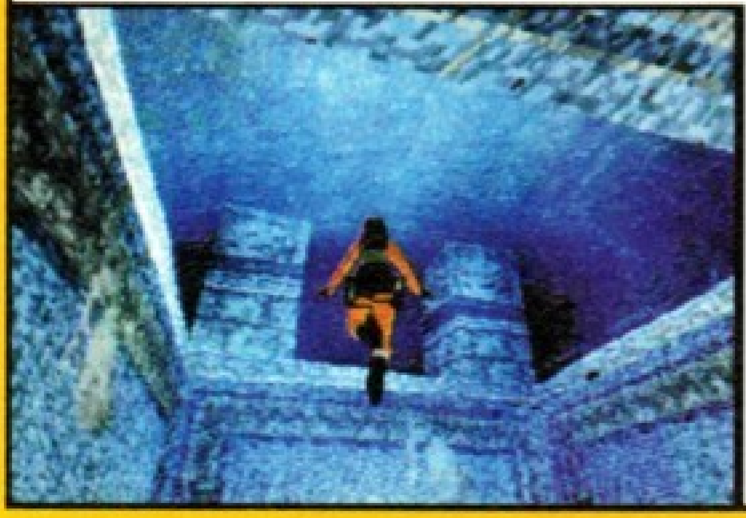
This is how they design the levels in TOMB RAIDER.





GIRL ABOUT TOWN

If you think that Tomb Raider is at heart a shoot 'em up, you'd be quite wrong. Lara spends much of her time exploring, solving puzzles, and clambering about the diverse surroundings she finds herself in. To do this, she need to be pretty lithe and supple. As well as the usual athletic distinctions of being able to run swiftly jump long distances and somasault, she is also something of a Chris Bonnington when it comes to climbing. Providing she hasn't got any weapons in her hands, she can grab onto ledges by her fingertips after a particularly long jump, and go about scaling the walls, just so long as there's the odd knobbly thing to grip on to. There are also some parts of the game when she has to demonstrate he swimming prowess.







LEVEL 3: EGYPTIAN

You can't really have a 'variety pack' of ancient culture without the Egyptians, so here they are complete with walls covered in hieroglyphics, plenty of gold relics and a sarcophagus now and then. The Egyptian level features some of the toughest puzzles in the game because it is the entrance to the lost Atlantian pyramid.



Lara is a real gung-ho kinda girl. So don't try out any cheap chat up lines on her or she'll pump you full of lead.





This is one of the characters Lara can expect to confront in the game.

LEVEL 4: ATLANTEAN PYRAMID

Once Lara manages to penetrate the pyramid it would seem all is quiet. However once one of the boss enemies activates it, things rapidly go berserk. Lara has to make it to the control centre, destroy it, and escape as the pyramid is exploding about her. Phew!





WATCH OUT FOR THE – ARGH!

One thing that Tomb Raider is full of is traps. There are loads of different ones to watch for like the classic crumbling floor, denoted by cracks in the floor tiles, or doors in the floor that open when they're trod on. Some of the traps use films for inspiration, like the rolling balls reminiscent of Raiders of the Lost Ark, as are the blow darts and fireballs which are activated when Lara foolishly walks over a pressure pad. There are also spikes which emerge from the floor if Lara runs over them, causing some lovely impaling, something that's a bit like an old game called Prince of Persia.



Wolf meets sharp blade – wolf loses head! Simple.

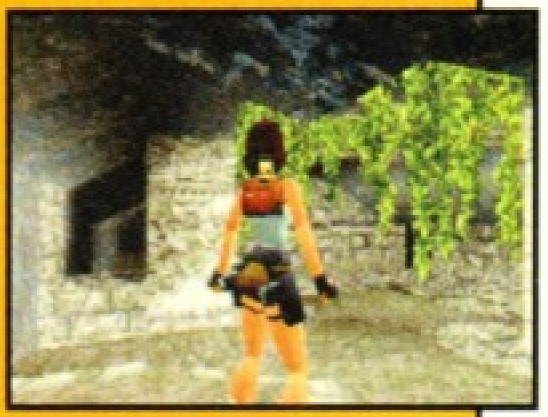






FILM '96

One of the principle attractions of Tomb Raider is likely to be the effect the camera has on the proceedings. Trying to make a game look convincingly like a film is nothing new – a game like Resident Evil on the PlayStation has been very successful at attempting to do this. With Tomb Raider there are four different camera angles in all, and they are employed at different stages of the game to enhance the atmosphere. Here's a look at them in more detail:



THE SPOT CAMERA: This is the view employed for the vast majority of the time. The action is viewed from just over Lara's left or right shoulder depending on which is most suitable at the time. When Lara is still, you also have the opportunity to inspect your surroundings a bit more by moving the camera about with the direction buttons. This includes things like looking over a ledge to see if it's a big drop, or looking up to inspect whether an obstacle can be climbed.

Bazza says: *Used in a lot of slasher type films to create suspense. You know the kind – you're just behind the distressed female as she nervously wanders down the long dank corridor.*



THE DYNAMIC PAN: Simply for a bit of show this one. The camera rotates all the way around Lara enabling you to view her from any angle and at any distance, providing there are no obstacles in the way of course. This is simply used for dramatic effect

Bazza says: *It's kind of like the rotating they do in films when two people are dancing at a ball or something. It's also often used with a touch of distorting depth-of-field to convey someone who's going a bit loopy on a deadly poison.*



THE EXTERNAL VIEW: This is used when Lara moves into certain areas or performs certain actions. It either works as a cut or a flowing change in angle and it's generally employed to give you a fresh perspective on a situation and reveal items that might be of interest.

Bazza says: *The simple cut technique is as old as cinema itself, known in the business as 'montage' you know. The flowing change of angle maintains a sense of rhythm and pace.*



THE THREE POINT VIEW: This is a bit of a cunning idea actually. When Lara finds herself near an object or something else that's important, the camera focuses on the object, putting Lara between it but in line with the camera. This sounds a bit confusing, but what it means in real terms is that the camera's angle will move to keep both Lara and the object in the frame.

Bazza says: *Errr...*

ALIEN SYNDROME

IT'S BEEN THREE YEARS SINCE ALIEN TRILOGY WAS FIRST PLANNED (FOR THE MEGA-CD!), AND IT'S FINALLY MADE IT TO A WAY MORE INTERESTING SEGA FORMAT. WE HIT PROBE'S CROYDON HQ FOR A SNEAK PREVIEW...







ARTWORK © SIMON BISLEY 1996





Let's hope real aliens aren't this messy, or we'll spend the rest our lives cleaning the carpets after they've popped round for tea,

ALIEN TRILOGY SHOWCASE

Hey there kids, Agent Sculder from the Aliens Are Real Society here. Those wacky kids from Saturn Mag have asked me to introduce this Alien Trilogy showcase because I'm such an expert on all things extra-terrestrial. Now you might think I'm just some sad old beardy man with a lot of bad jumpers who never got over watching The Day the Earth Stood Still as a kid, and you'd be quite right.

In fact, it was my careers teacher who came up with the idea of launching AARS, because the only words I would say at age 16 were "Klaatu Barada Nikto" over an over again like some kind of space-age Benedictine monk. And what a brilliant idea that was, because now eccentric millionaires fund my anal hobbyist career, and I get to go on the telly every time they need a tenuous pro-alien "expert".

So far I've been on ITN, The Big Breakfast and Richard Littlejohn Live and Uncut. I didn't like that last one, because he called me a sad failure in front of everyone. Well, Ricky, just you wait until the Martians attack – I'll make sure you're first in line to be scorched by a laser ray. And they'll make me King of Earth for paving the way for their attack.

Anyway, as a rationally-minded adult and a natural skeptic I am of course wary of conclusively saying that aliens are real.

BUT THEY ARE. THEY ARE! THEY'VE GOT BIG BUG EYES AND SPACE SHIPS AND THEY'RE COMING! MY GOD, THEY'RE COMING FOR US ALL!!

However, films such as the Alien Trilogy themselves are obviously fictitious and xenophobic, constantly portraying otherworldly life as ugly, uncivilised aggressive predators with no human emotions. When in real life all the alien blokes are like that, but the girl aliens all look like Jane Fonda in Barbarella, and they all fancy me. Games such as this are an evil influence on our children, and mean when we finally do make contact our first instinct will be to destroy all the aliens immediately to save us the bother of a war. This is wrong. What we should do is walk peacefully into their mines and stomachs under the command of me, Governor Sculder, Supreme Ruler of the Blue Planet.

If you'd like to find out more about aliens, try watching Dolph Lundgren's Dark Angel, that's spot on, I reckon. Or you could write to AARS and request our newsletter – The Aliens Friend – and a copy of my book, How to Salute Me When the Aliens Make Me King.

Watch the skies, dudes,
Agent Sculder. AARS





Blast the heck out of these here outworlders. It's just what they deserve.







(ABOVE) Oi – are ye lookin' at me, pal? Are ye? Come on – say something. Deaf as well as stupid are ye? Don't just stand there – what have you got to say for yourself? Right you've asked for it you crate scum, I hate it when crates start giving me gip.
(BELOW)A chest burster leaps in on the far right hand side. Icky.





That there is the Cyber Jockey. He obviously rides a mechanical horse or something.













(ABOVE) This is one of the evil Corporation Samurai guards. They look not unlike the Hoth fatigues Stormtoopers from The Empire Strikes Back, and they're about as friendly. (BELOW) Ha ha! Kill them all! That'll learn 'em! They won't mess with you again! Ha ha!





HOW YOU CAN KILL

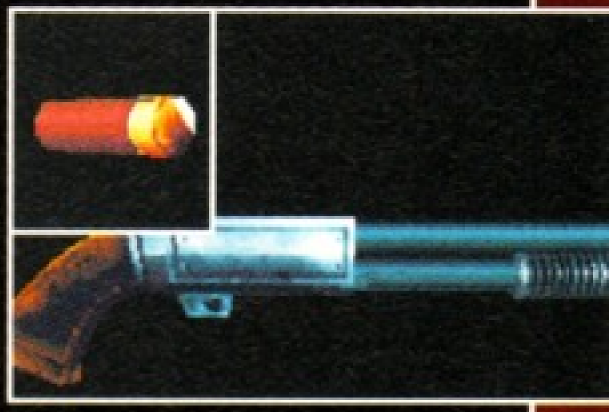
If you're going to make a game about killing loads of aliens one thing you can't afford to scrimp on is the hardware. Luckily, Alien Trilogy has been programmed by Probe, who've learnt all about violence from their many Mortal Kombat conversions. Whilst Ripley (that's you) starts the game with a pretty feeble handgun many bigger and more deadly shooters are hidden around the levels. No aliens are gonna kick sand in your face, that's for sure. As long as you don't run out of ammunition, when they'll eat your head.

9mm HANDGUN



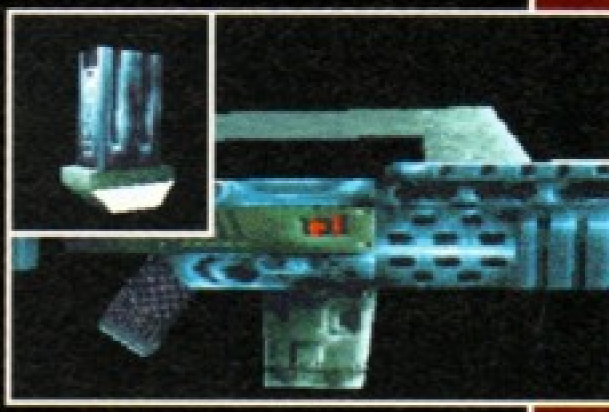
This is what you start the game with. Good for shooting humans, as any Compton gangsta will tell you, but bad for killing aliens. As they won't. Anyway, ditch this and get something good as soon as possible, using it only against weak foes to save ammo for your big guns.

SHOTGUN



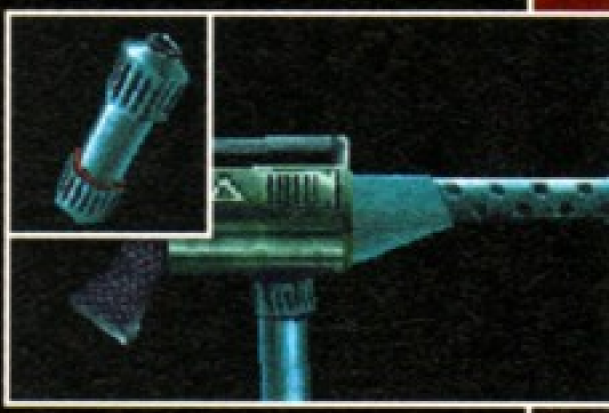
The wide spread of the shotgun makes it good for long-range peppering of your foes, but it becomes less powerful the further away they are. So if you're a scaredy and like running away, this is the gun for you.

PULSE RIFLE



A combination of machine gun and grenade launcher, this is really two weapons in one – like those clever shampoos you can buy. This is the weapon you'll probably get the most use out of, as it's great for sweeping rooms of aliens.

FLAMETHROWER



A bit of an outdated concept to find its way into a sci-fi game, this horrific piece of barbaric weaponry doesn't scare full-blown aliens much. It is, thought, very useful indeed for destroying alien eggs and face huggers because it covers a large spread.

SMART GUN



Only very lucky players will get hold of this, the hardest thunderstick in the land. Ammunition for the smart gun is highly limited, because otherwise the game would probably be very easy. Use wisely. Not against walls and corpses.



That's what happens when an alien melds with a dog. It looks red.



Aliens that have gestated in humans, however, come out all dark and shiny. Like your boots.





NOW HEAR THIS

The thing about CDs, other than them being small and you being able to eat your dinner off them, is that they're really good for storing sound on. Hence, one should imagine, their day job as a music recording format. Probe are no slouches in the brain department, and have picked up on this unique ability, utilising it for their own evil ends. These ends consist of sampling loads and loads of sound effects and snippets of speech from the film and transposing them to the game. For example, in one level you're confronted with a wall full of coccooned colonists, each of whom whispers "Kill me" when you go near them – just like in the second film (because it is from the second film). Over 60% of the effects, including the aliens screeches, are taken directly from the movies. Which is quite clever.







HOW YOU CAN DIE

The thing with living is that it ends. We've all got to go sometime, some ways messier than others. As previously stated, shooting my way out of Alien Hell wouldn't be my preferred ticket-punching method, but the number and variety of threats on offer in Al Tril would indicate that it is probably Ripley's. Along with the multitudinous human and xenomorphic terrors wandering around, the environment itself throws up new ways for someone to die. Falling down a long way, running into scalding hot steam issuing from pipes – all these things and more cause damage to fragile Ripley, who is, let's face it, only a girl. Plus the aliens have acid for blood, which has a tendency to splash over your or pool on the floor when you're blowing bits of them away. This is deadlier than you would believe, so watch where you're walking.







I WANT TO EAT YOUR BRAIN!

Frankly I for one don't fancy the idea of shooting my way out of a dingy industrial complex crawling with deadly aliens. Now that's just my opinion, and it doesn't mean I'm berating shooting your way out an industrial complex etc etc. But if I changed my mind, I certainly want to know, at the very least, what those aliens are like. Well they're all different in Alien Trilogy, although many of them look very similar. Some are faster, others stronger or more intelligent. Some of them like shopping. Each of the enemy flavours listed below vary in their individual characteristics (which apparently took about a year and a half to do), so don't underestimate them.

EGGS



No actual threat to the player, but they look icky. Don't look at them for too long or you'll feel queasy.

FACE HUGGERS



Flimsily built and easy to kill, but hard to hit thanks to their small size and speedy movement. Scary. Pop out of eggs.

HUMAN GUARDS



Employed by your company to stop you killing all the aliens so they can use them in a war, or something like that.

ANDROID GUARDS



The same as humans, but tougher and with white blood. Or lubricating fluid or whatever mechanical stuff it is.

SAMURI GUARDS



Really really really hard guards. Not as hard as aliens, but probably about as hard as you. Kill them all!

DOG ALIENS



Aliens that have gestated inside dogs. They walk funny, but don't laugh at them because they're still evil and will kill you if you let them.

WARRIOR ALIENS



Aliens that have gestated inside humans, these comprise the majority of the enemies you'll face. They're really scary and very hard to kill.

QUEEN ALIEN



The mother of all aliens, the Queen Alien is absolutely enormous. Testament to the power of the Saturn, and the power of aliens too. Rock rock hard.



DRINK ME

Never mind her guile, guns or grenades, Ripley's biggest asset on her travels to death are her big pockets. And we mean HUGE, she can carry all sorts of stuff. Luckily there's all sorts of stuff for her to carry, most of it just sitting there on the floor waiting for her to pick up. Here's a quick rundown of the goodies on offer and what they can do for you...

ARMOUR VEST



Good bullet-stopping capabilities, this should protect you from the guards, until it gets shot to pieces. Don't expect it to save you from aliens, though.

SHOULDER LIGHT



Hands-free torch which is essential for traversing darkened areas as it allows you to see what's coming and where you're going. Doesn't have a brilliant range, mind.

NIGHT VISION GOGGLES



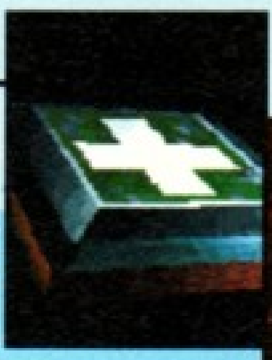
See in the dark, and look stupid, by wearing these. You're better off with the shoulder light if you can find it, because these aren't that efficient. Better than a poke in the eye with a sharp mandible, though.

ID CARD



Allows Ripley to get served in pubs. They also open doors, which is what you'll need them for in the game. Steal them from the bodies of dead people.

ENERGY



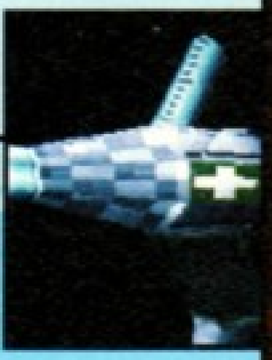
In pod or static floor tile incarnations, you'll most likely need to collect lots of this to replenish the damage done by those out to kill you.

MEDIKIT



An energy pod you can hang on to and use when you feel like it. Always hang on to a good stock of these, as there isn't always energy around when you need it (ie after a big fight).

ADRENALINE SHOT



Hard to find, but useful in the extreme. It's like a medical kit but replenishes twice as much energy. Don't try it at home if you scrape your knee or the ambulance will come.

AUTO MAPPER



This really sad kid I used to know at school used to use graph paper to draw maps of all his games. The auto mapper saves you from having to do the same thing, and ultimately gives you more time to spend cooking your tea.

BOOTS



Made for walking, and that's just what they'll do. These might not seem like much of a power-up, but they're acid proof, which saves you from scorching your tootsies of alien blood.



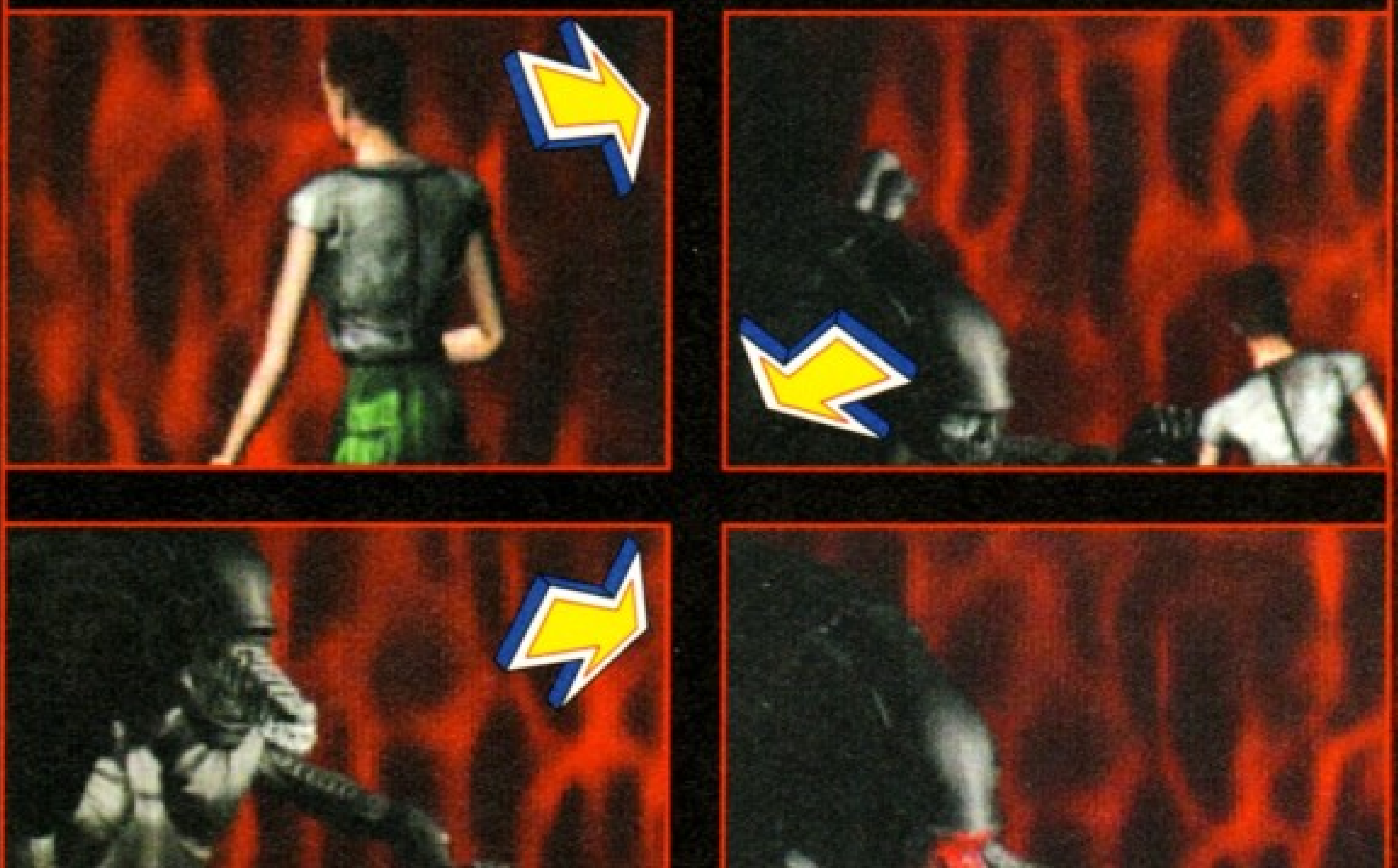
Grenades are good for blowing up large areas of things. Just ask any squaddie. They're sure to be a firm favourite with them.





GONNA MAKE YOU MOVE

Motion capture – it's the latest technological fad that everyone's talking about. Well, everyone in one room in Manhattan about a year ago was, anyway. That's because they were actually capturing some motion at the time, to later be used in this game. What motion capture is, right, is putting these reflective ball things on people, right, and they like... move about and you capture it sort of thing. On a computer. And the computer joins the dots between the balls and it makes a sort of skeleton, and a programmer pastes nice textured graphics over it and it comes out like an alien. One single lucky actor went through all the motions for aliens, soldiers and probably even face huggers, which he could have done by putting his two hands together at the thumbs and scuttling them along the floor.





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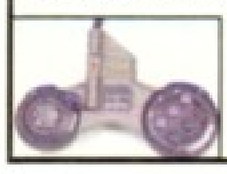
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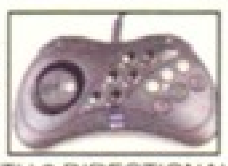


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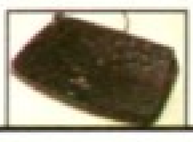


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RAISE THE CHEQUERED FLAG!!!

It's all over! The Time Attack competition which began way back in Issue 4 has finally reached its conclusion. Now it's time for those responsible for the three fastest times to gather up their video evidence and get it over to our offices for detailed inspection.

THE STORY SO FAR

Our Time Attack competition started way back in February and Checkpoint 1 saw some relatively leisurely times, the best of them being Leonardo Trovatori's 3.16.78. In the space of a month all top ten times were wiped out, and Checkpoint 2 saw the new leader, Dean Graham, knock a full ten seconds off the record with a time of 3.06.16. Impressive. Or so we thought until Checkpoint 3, when John Archer broke the three minute barrier with an amazing 2.58.43. Could it get any faster we thought?! By thunder yes! Checkpoint 4 in Issue 8, the last to feature a top ten, saw a phenomenal time of 2.48.23 by Andy C.B. Hoath, and a leader board full of stunning new times. So did the Hoathster hang on to first place? You're about to find out because here are the final results of our Time Attack competition...

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE SEGA TIME ATTACK 1996 SEGA RALLY TIME ATTACK COMPETITION

Pretty unbelievable really isn't it!! What we will stress at this stage is that this is the UNCONFIRMED final result. We've yet to receive video evidence from any of the top three racers, and any sign of cheating or fibbing will result in immediate disqualification, general derision from the masses and the person immediately below moving up a place. However, if Mark Michael Nightingale and the two runners-up get their videos in pronto and all is well, we'll be showing you how these legendary times were achieved next month.

TIME ATTACK WINNERS!

FIRST PLACE: Mark Michael Nightingale	2.36.22
SECOND PLACE: Graham Sims	2.44.69
THIRD PLACE: Andy Grant	2.46.96
4. STEVE MARTIN	2.47.09
5. MARK MICHAEL NIGHTINGALE	2.47.42
6. ANDY C.B. HOATH	2.47.99
7. ANDY C.B. HOATH	2.48.23
8. LEIGH STEVENSON	2.53.54
9. DARRAN WARE	2.53.58
10. NICHOLAS WARE	2.53.89

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SEGA SATURN™

Review *Index*

Just about everyone in the SEGA SATURN MAG offices is walking around with bags under their eyes that you could fit your weekly shopping in. Why? because we've given up on stuff like going to bed and dreaming, and replaced it with NiGHTS instead, which we start playing at about midnight with a good cup of hot chocolate, and eventually abandon in time for breakfast. You might think this sounds a bit drastic but just you wait until you see it. Oh boy! NiGHTS aside, there are some other fine games to check out this month, and the odd lame one of usual.
So my darkling friends, peruse the stuff that dreams are made of!



















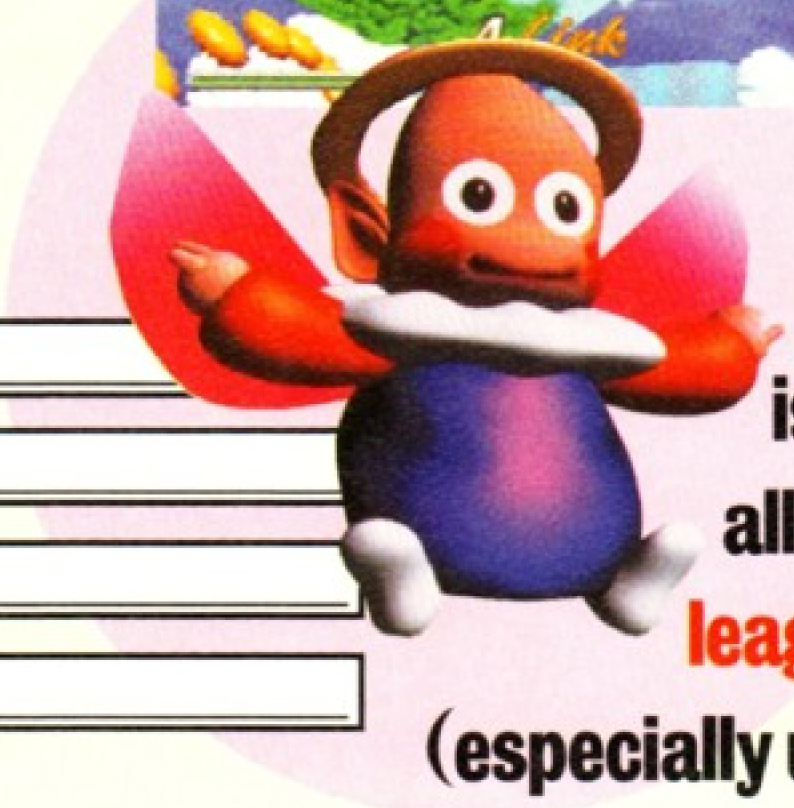




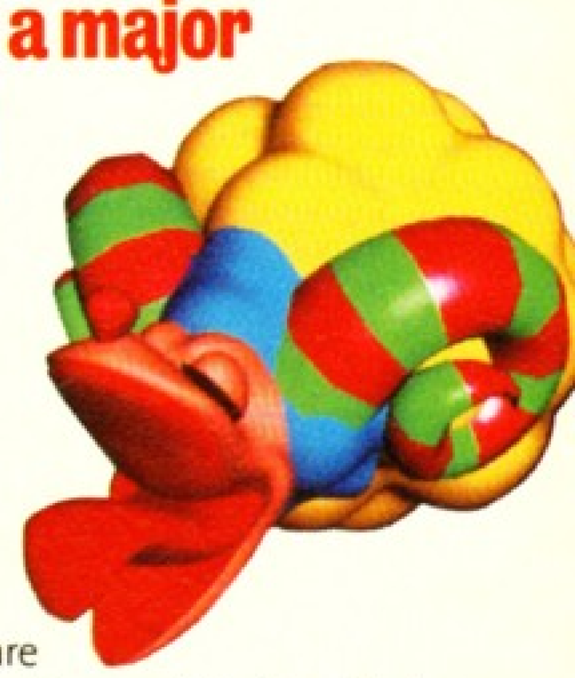


REVIEW

BY	SEGA
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	DREAMY
RELEASE	AUGUST



The wait is over, and the suspected Game of the Year is ready for release, and review. So has it been worth all the wasted drool? Or could Nights be a major league embarrassment to all concerned (especially us, who've given it all this coverage)?



Every so often a software house will spring a sudden surprise on you. This is generally when they've got something really brilliant up their sleeves which doesn't need several years of constant PR to get your attention. When the producers know they've got something special in their hands they'll go to great lengths to reduce the probability of journalists finding out anything about it until it's near enough to finished to be truly astounding. We didn't hear about NiGHTS until four months from the end of its year-long gestation period, and given that it's from Sonic Team, you'd think Sega would be only too happy to start shouting that they were working on a big money new production. Well, they didn't, and we're glad because it made the shock of seeing such an awesome title for the first time something quite tangible.



NiGHTS' big flappy shoes make ideal flippers for underwater navigation. Mind the reverse controls, though.



You may have gathered through the extensive coverage we've given NiGHTS in previous issues that we think it's corking. But then a single look at the screenshots would convince you of that without us bothering to say a word.

What makes NiGHTS so appealing is its concept and feel. This sounds fairly simple, but a lot of games you'll see on the shelves, whilst competently programmed and enjoyable to play or even innovative, don't concentrate of how the player is going to feel when they're in the midst of playing it. The atmosphere of a game is often what elevates a title to classic status, and NiGHTS has more atmosphere than a fully terraformed Mars with loads of plants and animals and no pollution. Plus the control system is so instinctive it pulls you straight into the action. This is one of those games that'll have you twisting around in your seat involuntarily mimicking the on-screen movements of NiGHTS. It transcends those early Sonic-meets-Ecco comparisons with its fluid snaking around.



The game mechanics are simple enough, the objectives you're set are easily understood, but much harder to accomplish. This is a game designed very much with the arcade-playing reflexes and co-ordination crowd than platform/puzzlers. Much like Sonic, strangely enough.

Visually, NiGHTS is one of the most captivating games the Saturn has witnessed yet. The environments are rich in texture and detail, each level having a distinct individual personality. The animation is superb, and the bosses (most of which are HUGE) are worthy of particular note. The mad colour schemes the Team have used amplify the dream concept and give your eyes an extreme rod/cone workout.

However, NiGHTS isn't without its faults. The Nightmareans seen in the main levels (of which there are only a few) are quite bland-looking and don't really do very much. Obviously in a game played mostly against the clock, enemies are going to have a limited impact at best, but more time could have been spent on making your foes look as good as everything else. The other criticism is that NiGHTS isn't exactly what you could call massively difficult. Given a couple of days most reasonably accomplished gamesplayers will have clocked it. However, the incentive is there to keep going back to each level until you've ranked an "A" on every one, at which point we suspect new game options will open themselves up although we're not sure). However, even if this doesn't happen you'll still return to NiGHTS just for the joy of playing it, plus watching the Nightopians evolve through the A-Life system is very jolly.

Basically, NiGHTS is everything it's cracked up to be. A real showcase for the Saturn, massively addictive and totally friend-impressing (unless they've got a PlayStation, then they'll be sick). Whatever game you're thinking of getting right now, put it on hold and get this instead. You won't regret it.

RAD









NiGHTS







(BELOW) This is NiGHTS fooling around in a hidden secret subterranean cave. He'd better watch out though, as the ceiling collapses after a short while, dooming our errant NiGHTS. Not to be attempted with your slow-moving kid character.

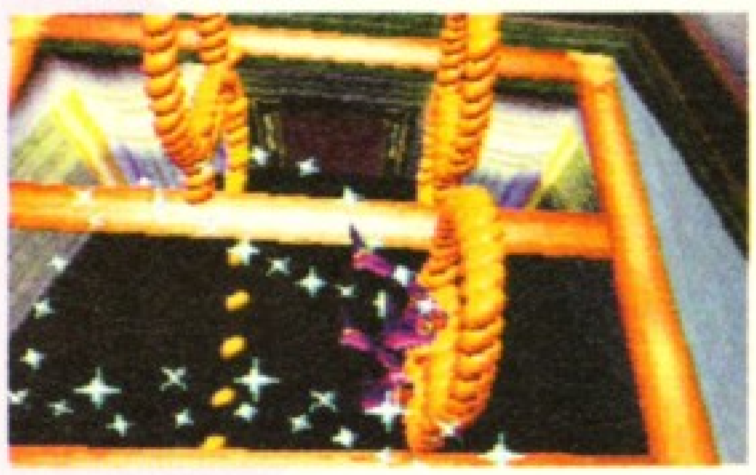




Here we see little NiGHTS flying through some hoops. Doing this doesn't just reward him with all-important points, it also replenishes his Drill Dash attack bar. But you'd already know that if you'd read the Showcase. So do it now.



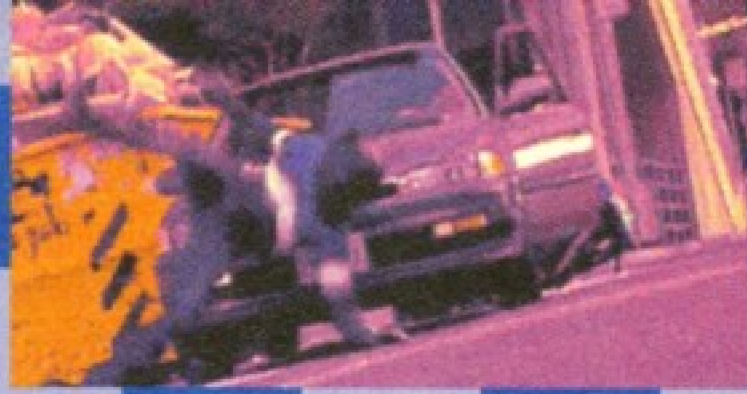
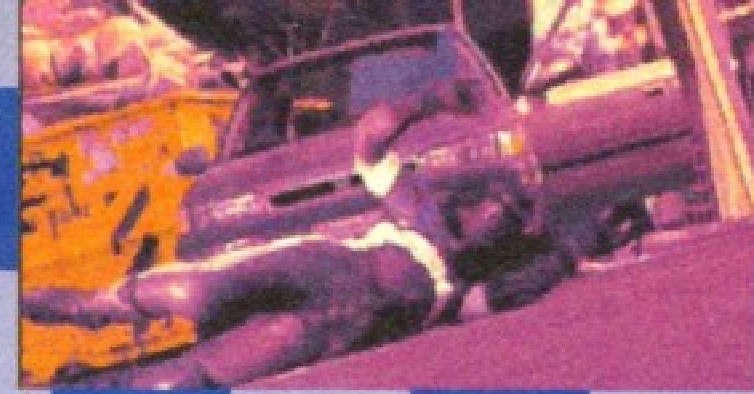
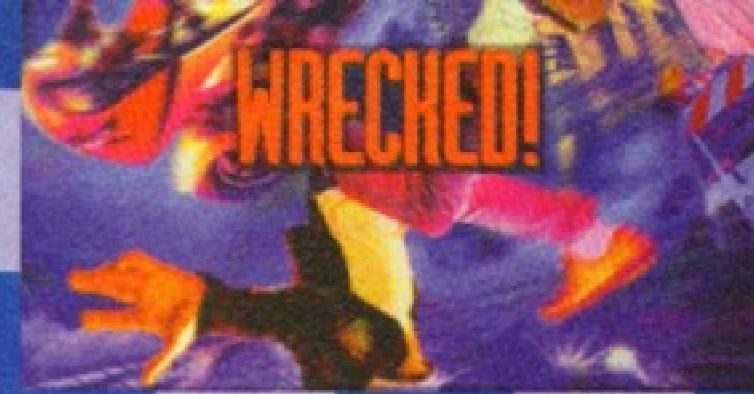
Smashing through the levitating snowballs on this stage yields top goodies. However, it's easy to snow-blind yourself with debris.



Destined to be the flagship title for the Saturn, NiGHTS combines classic gameplay qualities with the all-new possibilities opened up by 32-BIT technology. Awe inspiring.

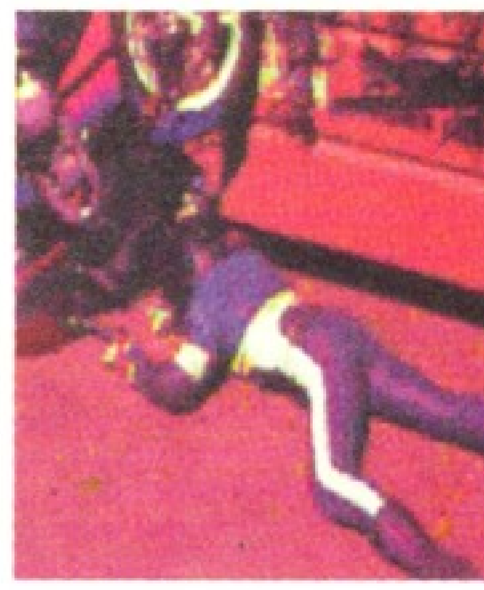
graphics	97
sound	95
playability	97
lastability	90

overall **96%**

BY	EA
PRICE	£39.99
STYLE	RACING
RELEASE	OUT NOW

The Road Rash legacy has returned for one last outing on the Saturn. But , after four years, does it still have what it takes to thrash the pants off other racers? Or is it just destined for the scrap heap?











The Road Rash series has had a long and successful history on Sega consoles. In fact, when it was first released on the Megadrive way back in 1992, it was just about the best thing going. After all, it included, blisteringly fast play, merciless violence and a great two player option too. And after the first version, it seemed to get better and better, right up until the awesome title that was released on the 3DO a couple of years ago. In fact, the format hasn't changed at all since then, and it's largely this version that makes it on to the Saturn this month.



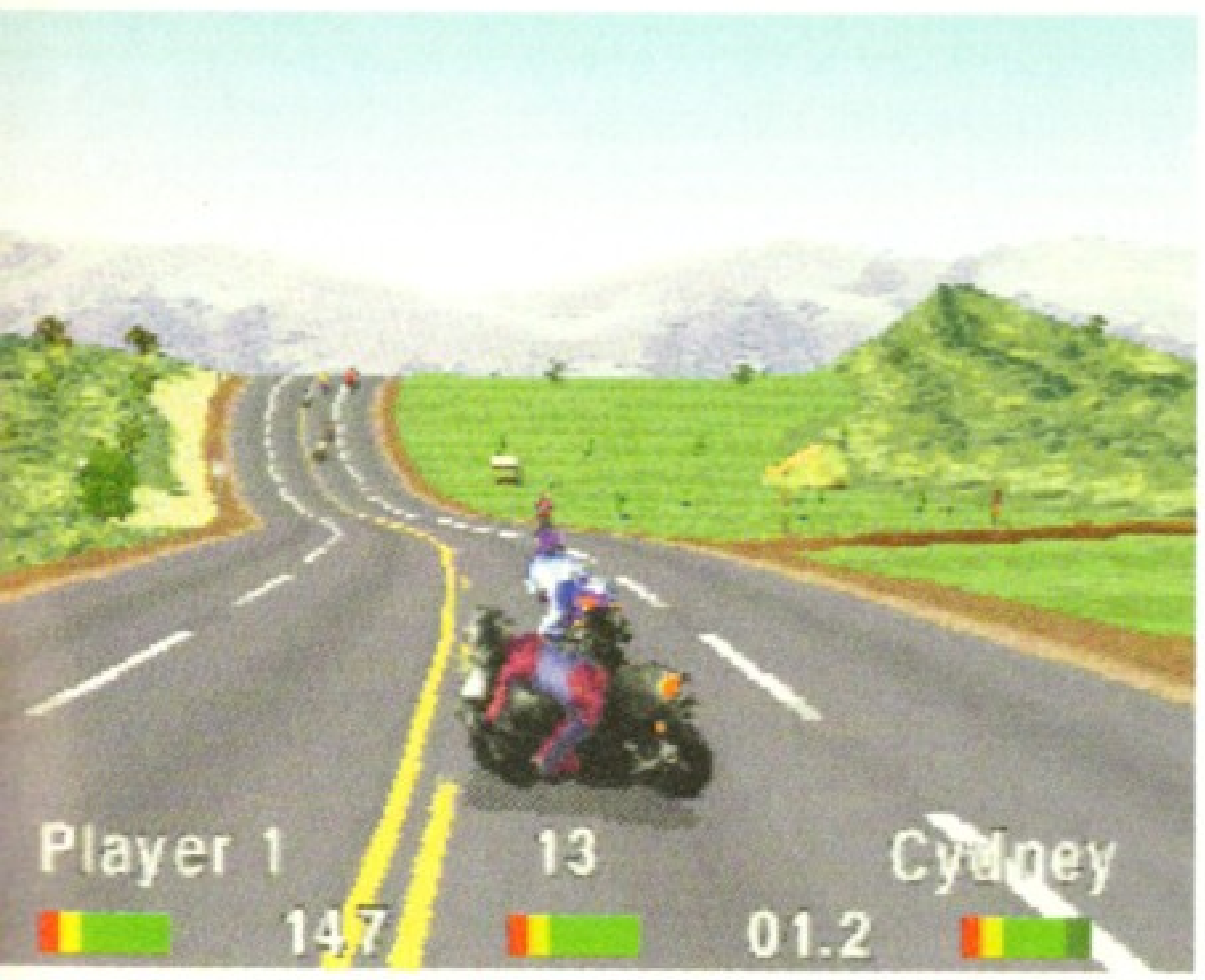
So, for those of you who haven't had the pleasure of playing this on the 3DO (actually, unless you own one, there's one reason why you would have played this before), this version of Road Rash is played out in a variety of more urban settings. Like a very busy town for instance. Which means just one thing. Grannies. Yes, that's right, grannies. You can run 'em over, or dodge 'em, it's up to you , although we know the most entertaining option of the two.

As usual, there's the usual options of championship mode and one-off races (although there's no two player mode), and in addition to all the weapon stealing malarkey, you can also steal your opponent's bike and ride off into the distance, therefore giving you the chance to win races more easily.

Of course, if you've played Road Rash before, you'll know that this is rather marvellous fun, and it's a pretty long lasting affair too. However, the question has to be raised as to whether in these days of Sega Rally and even Daytona, something like Road Rash can still provide the thrills that we've come to expect. And the answer is, yes. Sort of. It's certainly still fun to play, and it's pretty addictive stuff too. However, you can't help wondering whether the programmers could have made a bit more effort to make this different from the other versions. After taking so long to bring it out, we would have at least expected to see an extra playable track. And, of course, we would have expected to see a pixel-perfect conversion of the 3DO original. As it stands, this is a poor version of the original game in that the tracks have been poorly recreated, almost as if the programmers just couldn't be bothered.

Still, for all these criticisms, Road Rash still remains a brilliantly playable game, that despite having no new features is still fun enough to keep you playing it. And, if you're really into this sort of game, there's no doubt that you'll find it enjoyable. it's just doubtful that anyone would choose this over a racing game like Daytona or Sega Rally or even Need for Speed. Overall, "quite nice" are probably the two words that sum it up best. Can we see some new stuff now, please?

SAM



This is the Sierra Nevada course. If you play in thrash mode, you can choose any course you like, although in race mode, you'll have to go through them all in order. This is quite an easy course, as there's plenty of open road for all the riders.





NOOO! NOT THE GRANNY!

Here at SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, we're quite fond of our grannies. In fact, we'd hate to think of them pootling around the streets while some biker thug attempts to run them over with his nasty oily motorcycle. But, that's exactly what happens in Road Rash. And in this game, the grannies (and the other pedestrians) look really fragile and everything. Now that's not very nice is it? But, after a while, you soon get used to knocking these tottering old bags over, even completely disassociating them from your own sweet grandma. In the end, you'll just wish that there were more of them to run over, because it certainly beats getting into a fight with another heavy metal biker type.







REVIEW



ROAD RASH

A POTTED HISTORY OF ROAD RASH

ROAD RASH MEGADRIVE: *The original, and some would say the best version of the game. Blaze around the world on your soused up bike, buy a better machine with your race winnings and beat up another human competitor in the split screen two player mode.*

ROAD RASH 2 (&3): Well, almost the same as Road Rash in principle, but with loads more different races and plenty of mew characters. Oh, it's a bit faster too and there are better weapons to pick up than in the original.

ROAD RASH CD: *Again, almost the same as both of the previous Megadrive games, except it was on CD format and had a grainy intro sequence. Still it was pretty good if you were the owner of a Mega-CD.*

ROAD RASH 3DO: *The best version of the game on any system. Accompanied by music from real rock stars, a great front end and really, really fast play, this was one of the best games of its time on any system. But since it was on 3DO, it didn't really receive as much attention as it should have done. Still the best version, even one year or so on.*

ROAD RASH MASTER SYSTEM AND GAME GEAR: *Like most Game Gear games, you can't always tell what's going on with this version of Road Rash, but it had all the right logos and everything and you could just about make out the detail on the tiny riders, so we'll forgive it. The Master System is the same as the Game Gear version of course, only it's played on a bigger screen. Not the best way to be introduced to the RR phenomenon, we have to say.*

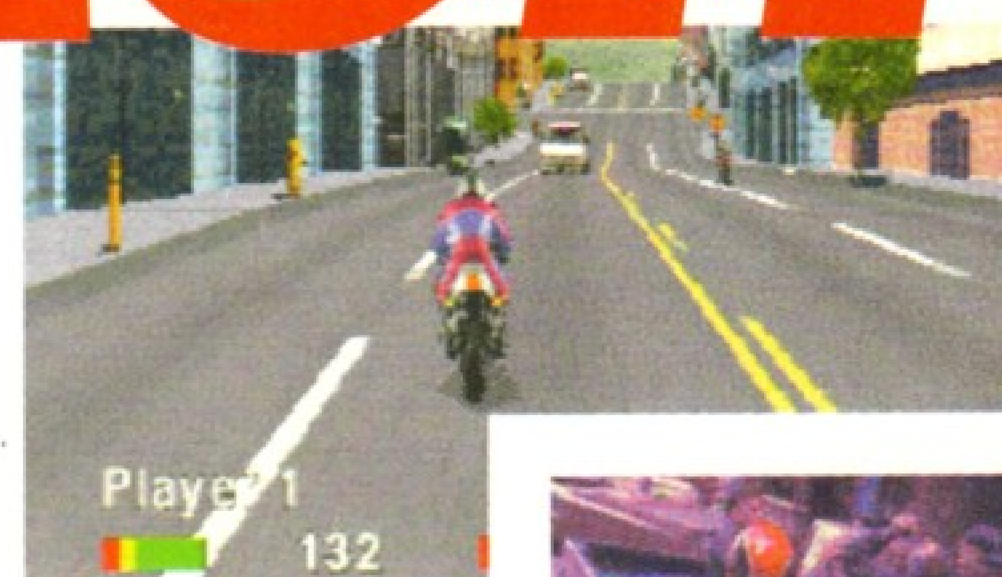


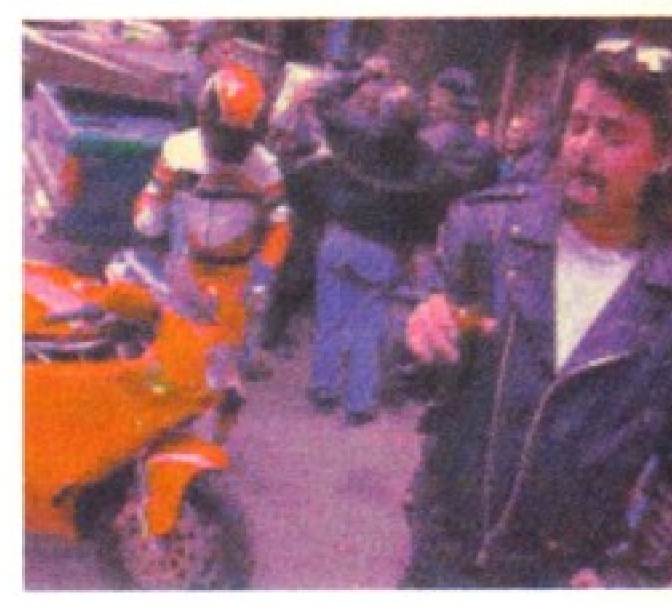
MEGADRIVE



MASTER SYSTEM







Are these bikers or footie fans? It's a bit hard to tell.

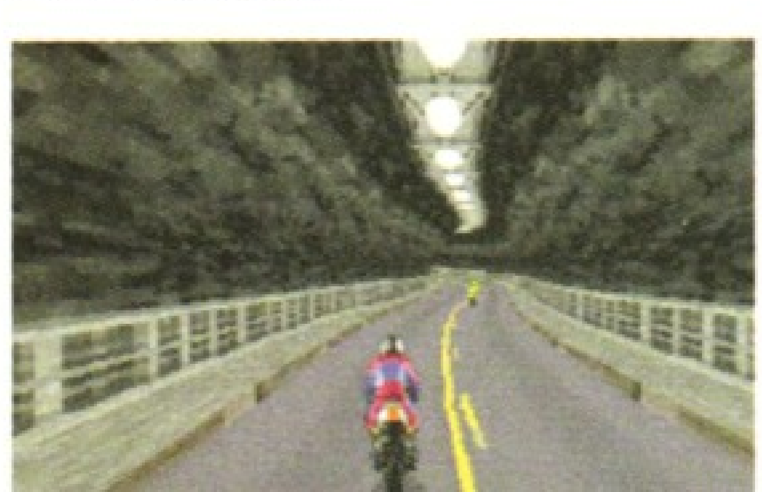


These are your mates. As you can see, they all have rather large chins.





Yeah, so why don't you kill me. Eh? Well, go on then. Make it quick.



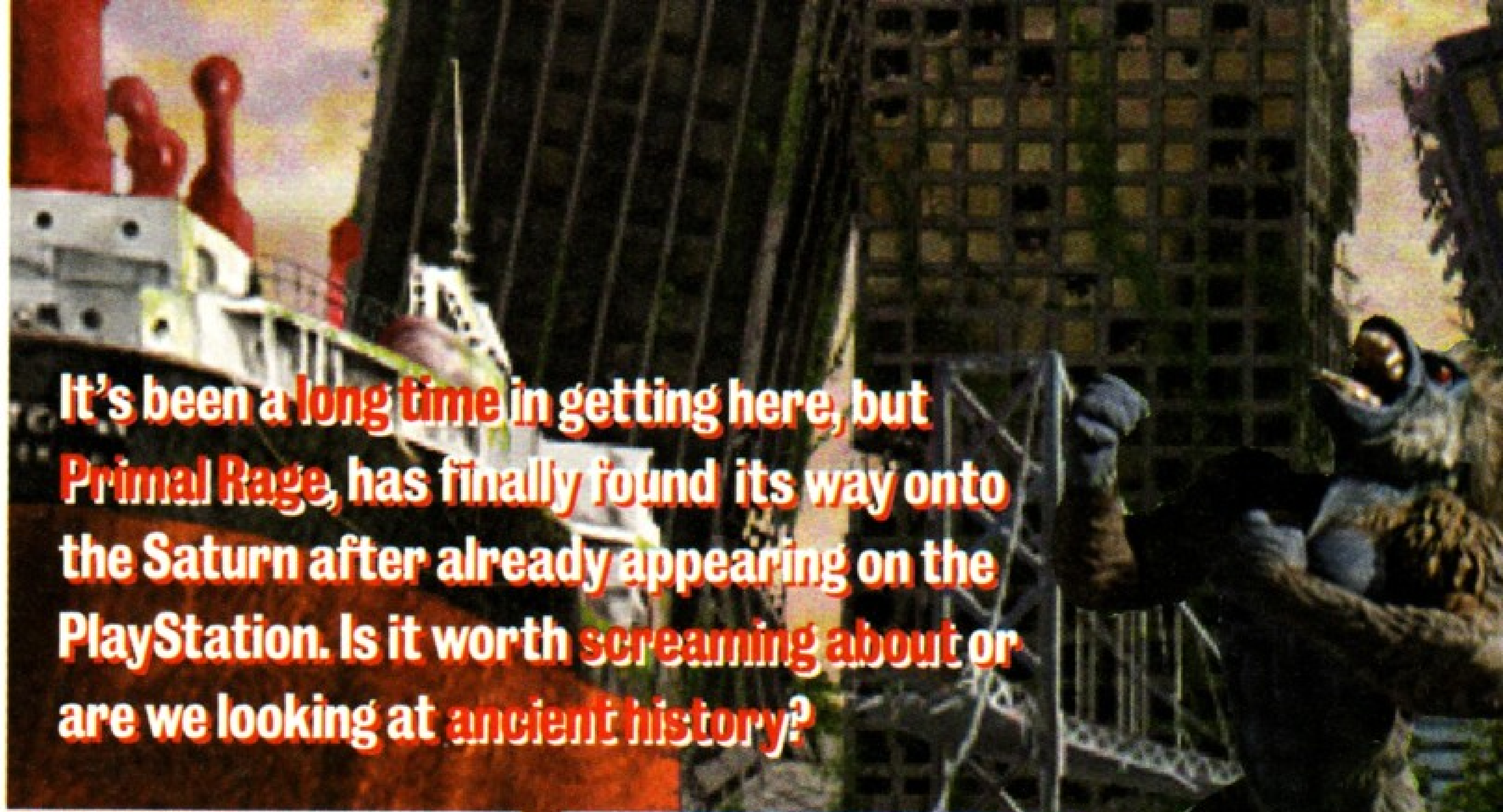
It's still a good game. But we would have expected more than a poor conversion of a 3DO classic.

graphics	79
sound	82
playability	80
lastability	74

overall

78%

BY	TIME WARNER
PRICE	£44.99
STYLE	BEAT 'EM UP
RELEASE	JULY



It's been a long time in getting here, but Primal Rage, has finally found its way onto the Saturn after already appearing on the PlayStation. Is it worth screaming about or are we looking at ancient history?





And after man had been annihilated, and the last survivors forced back into a state of neolithic existence, a new breed of fearsome hybrid species ruled the earth. The northern hemisphere was dominated by the 'donkeysaurus' and 'sheepadon', the burning hot central regions were filled with swarms of 'sparrowdactyls', and the icy southern landscape shook with the presence of mighty 'goat mammoths'...

Unfortunately none of these majestic beasts appear in Primal Rage, although the plot of the game does follow similar lines. With man back in a state of bear-skinned savagery, the player chooses between seven different monsters and engages in one-on-one battles for global domination, collecting little human worshippers as they go. When a fighter defeats an opponent they take over their territory and also the vanquished monsters resident worshippers, which don't really have a function other than to act as an alternative to points.



The seven monsters are all quite different in their way. Five of them could be classified as dinosaurs of a kind, and the other two are ape mutants, but each monster has a large range of specials at their disposal and a couple of fatalities as well. Armadon (a bit like a Stegasaurus) makes the most of its spikes by impaling opponents with wild dives and flinging spikes, Sauron (a sort of T-Rex) lets out primal screams and stunroars, Blizzard (a kind of snow ape) can freeze opponents with its breath and summon ice from nowhere, and — well, you get the picture. It's in trying to execute these moves that Primal Rage starts to grow frustrating. The kind of combinations you're expected to put together are awkward and fiddly.This wouldn't really be a complaint if you could customise things to make the moves play easier, but you can't, and even reconfiguring the joypad makes no difference. What makes things worse is that there's no real depth to the gameplay. Once you've learnt a characters special moves and fatalities, that's most of the fun over and done with. Rather than combatants reacting to each others strategies, Primal Rage is simply a matter of block, attack, block, attack in a really monotonous fashion.

The lack of thought given to the gameplay applies equally to the graphics and animation. Primal Rage looks more 16 bit than anything, the graphics quite ill-defined and the monsters moving in a blocky staccato fashion. This all goes to make up a title that should never really have made it onto 32 bit machines anyway, at least not in its original incarnation. Admittedly there are some nice touches, like the special some of the fighters can execute allowing them to eat the humans watching the proceedings, or the mildly comical nature of some of the moves like Chaos' 'power puke', but all in all Primal rage belongs back in the less competitive world of the 16 bit machine.

ROB













Sauron demonstrates one of his special attacks, a kind of fire spit. Diablo looks confused. His attacks include a searing flame.

STRANGE BUT NICE

Primal Rage features some special moves that share a little strangeness in common with a game like Mortal Kombat. Here for example we see Blizzard use his ice breath to freeze an opponent. This doesn't cause them any damage in itself, but leaves them open to attack. Blizzard finishes things off with a healthy smack to the gob!



REVIEW

PRIMAL RAGE



Talon shows off his razor sharpe claws to Sauron. He's also pretty nifty with his tail as well. Cheeky thing.





Blizzard takes on Vertigo. Vertigo seems to be getting the better of things here with his charming neck bite.



Armadon sits back to enjoy Chaos' attractive power puke. Try this one at parties kids!







TUG OF WAR

One of the more novel elements in Primal Rage is the tug-of-war option which you can play in two-player mode. Rather than each player having their own energy bar, they share the same one. The amount of damage taken and inflicted then moves it in one direction and another depending on who's getting the better of who. If you're two fairly evenly matched players this means bouts can go on for ages.





Will it go this way? Will it go that? Oh the suspense!

Primal Rage is a game that's looking far too dated to deserve the Saturn treatment. With poor graphics and shallow gameplay, the only redeeming feature is sharing the drudgery with another player.

graphics	70
sound	68
playability	62
lastability	58

overall **60%**



BY	BMG
PRICE	£39.99
STYLE	SPORTS SIMULATION
RELEASE	JULY/AUGUST 1996

Basketball has traditionally been a barren plain for the gameplay crop. So how does BMG's new settler settle in? Is it set up for success? Or merely unsettling?





Through infinite spawn and having a very nice friend I was once given the opportunity to watch Magic Johnson play an exhibition match, and it was ace. However, only now do I realise that the travel to the UK was affecting his performance. For the Magic Johnson I saw executed any number of lithe set-ups and performed some incredibly graceful feats of basketballing. Now, having played Slam 'n' Jam, I know that he normally waddles up and down the court like he's got a bag of onions sewn into his shorts and never jumps more than about four inches off the ground. Magic Irvin, and his equally famous (in America) pal Kareem Abdul Jabbar both make personal appearances in BMG's new simulation of the basketballing phenomenon and, so it would appear, neither of them has the natural limb co-ordination they were born with. This, at least is the impression I've garnered from observing their digitised counterparts lumber around the court in a manner more akin to a foul drunken tramp than a professional sportsman.



But hey, animation maketh not a game (as they say) – NBA Jam isn't exactly the sleekest of sports games and that sold by the lorry load. Sadly for Slam 'n' Jam though, quality do maketh a game, and this is where BMG's latest endeavour falls short. Every basketball game basically suffers from a similar fault, and that is that the sport itself, whilst fascinating to watch, is very simple – which often makes for a limited gameplay scope when translated to computer game form. Some attempts have been made to add more strategy to arcade-type conversions, or give more scope to players' abilities, but for the most part home basketballing is a case of each team taking turns to run up the court and score. Whilst Slam 'n' Jam fulfils this precis adequately, it just doesn't make for an exciting game.

All the trimmings you'd expect are in place, from the reams of stats through the large-scale licensed players – they just don't really seem that impressive. Even the running commentary (which should still have at least novelty value) is bland. It sounds like your non-basketballing dad is sitting in the room trying to sound cool by making comments about the game, saying things like "Ooh, where's the defence?" or "He must be on springs!" when somebody makes a jump. Perhaps unsurprisingly this starts to grate after the fiftieth hearing.

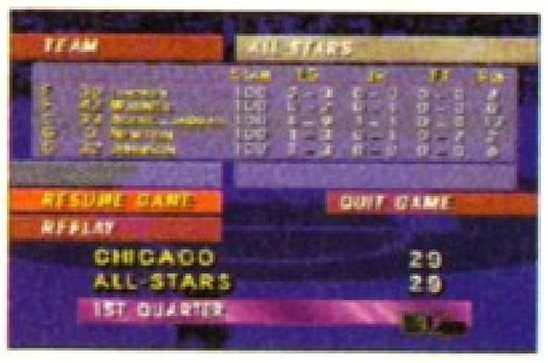
Of course, as is often the way with these things, it's not all bad. With other human players in tow Slam 'n' Jam is a far more rewarding experience. It's not that the game itself is awful, it's just based around a pretty shaky premise that requires an element of competition to resuscitate. But even then Slam 'n' Jam is unlikely to keep you occupied for more than a couple of days, even taking the special moves and other trinkets into account.

Given more moves, a more defined strategy element, sharper graphics and cleverer artificial intelligence Slam 'n' Jam could have been an exciting product. As it stands it's just an average basketball game of no real interest to anyone without an over-riding passion for the sport – and even then it's more Hit 'n' Miss than anything.

RAD



Have a look at these stats.



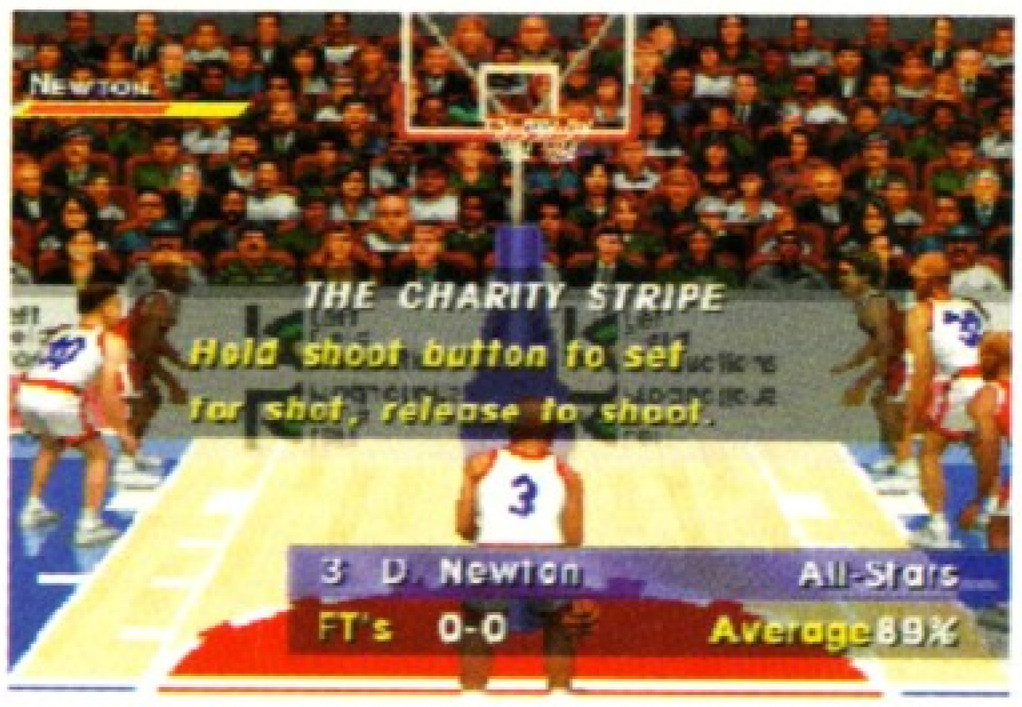




Well, looks like that chap's just scored a goal. Well done, that lad. I bet your old PE teacher's proud of you.



By the way, did anyone see the footy last night? What a corking game, eh? 4-1. Who'd have thought it.



Lord only knows what Charity Stripe means. But it's some kind of penalty free throw. In fact, two throws.



A man with a 'tache grabs the ball...



...He streaks down the lanes unchallenged...



...Tries a three-pointer, and it's blocked...

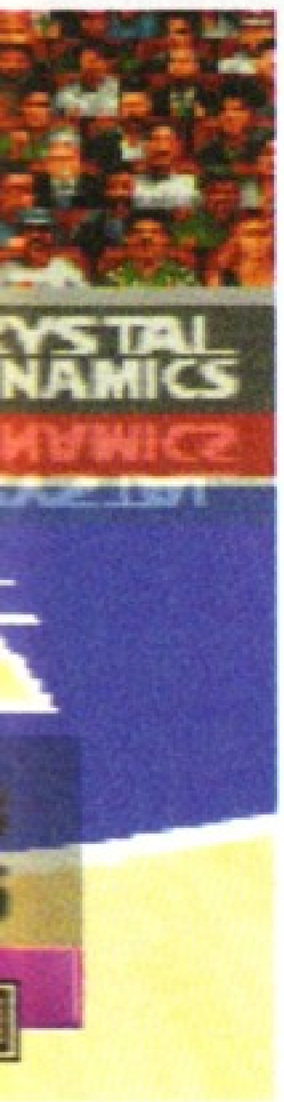


...Giving possession to his mighty opposition!









SLAM 'N JAM

IT'S THEM BLOKES OFF THE IDIOT BOX!



The great thing about these new all-powerful gaming machines is that they allow programmers to actually produce accurate representations of the people licensed by the canny marketing team. Sadly, this isn't quite enough power for the team behind Slam 'n' Jam. Perhaps this is because they're faced with somewhat larger licensees than the usual short-arse movie stars, but it has to be said that Magic and Kareem's computer counterparts stand little chance of being stopped in the street and asked if they are, in fact, Kareem or Magic. They're like that Queen impersonator you keep seeing on telly. You can tell who they're supposed to be, but they still don't look much like them.



Yo homies! Kareem Abdul Jabbar in the area! Check yo'!

Hi dudes! I'm Sir Clive Sinclair, and this is my C5!



Word up to my posse! Magic Johnson in full effect – live and direct on yo' ass, and get those big letters outta my face.

Whassup homes! I'm Trever McDonald, and I've lost me specs. Where am I?

SEQ 1



Los Angeles concede a free throw-in...

SEQ 2



...Which is immediatley passed way forward...

SEQ 3



...To a chap who shimmies through the defence!







The superstitious players fled in fear from Kareem's voodoo floating magic.

Not exactly terrible, but Slam 'n Jam is too limited to convert most gamers to the sport. Better luck next time.

graphics	76
sound	72
playability	70
lastability	66

overall **69%**

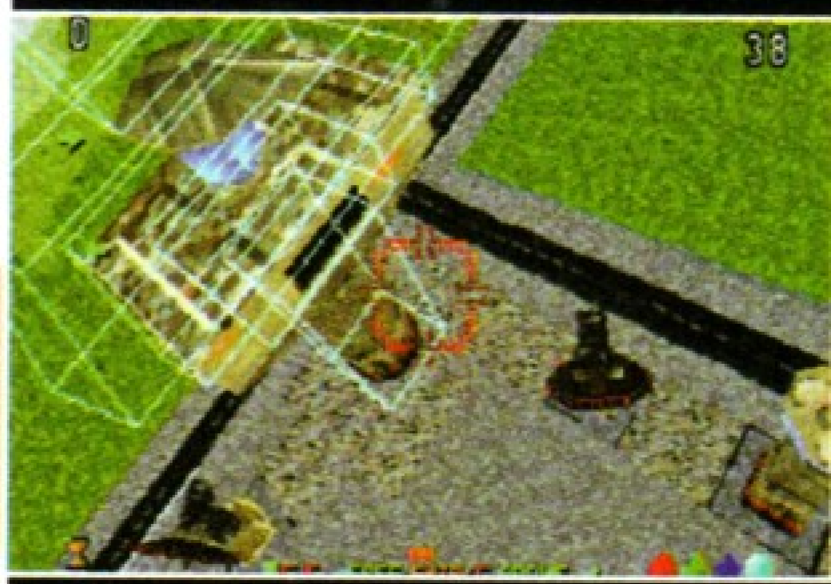






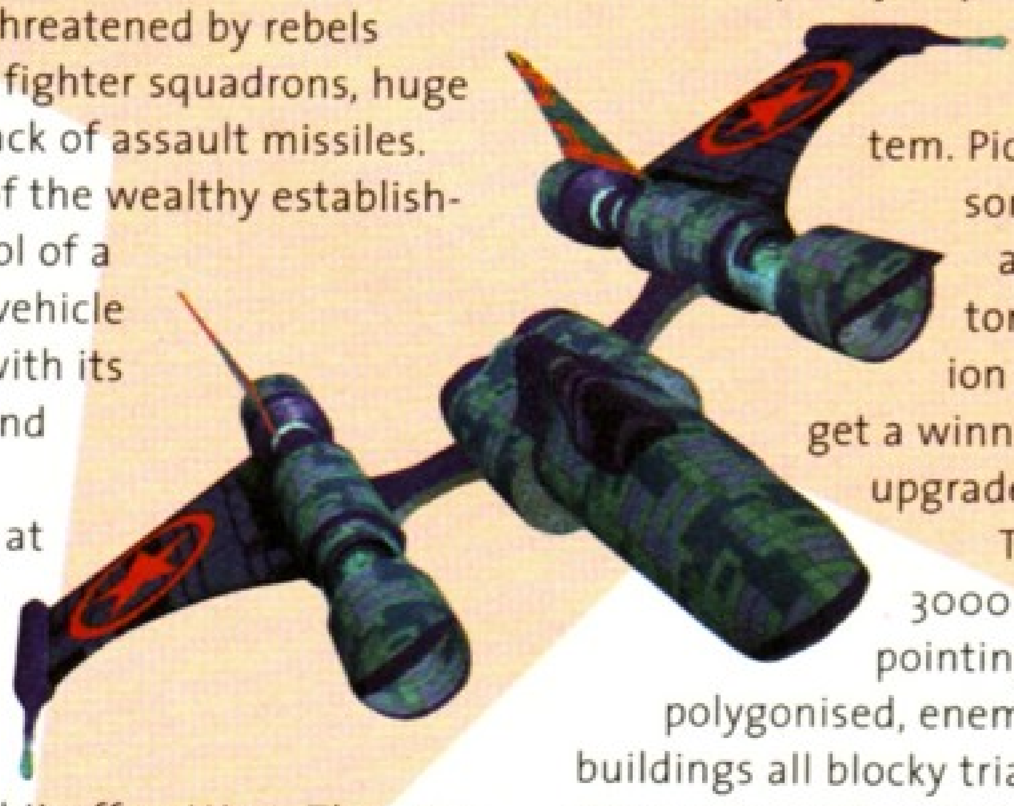
BY	TELSTAR
PRICE	£44.99
STYLE	FLIGHT SIM/SHOOTER
RELEASE	AUGUST

If time present and time past are both present in time future, and time future contained in time past, then all time is eternally present. As for Starfighter 3000, it's here today, gone tomorrow!



Yep, it's the future again, this time a further millennium down the line into 3037. Things are, as you'd expect, quite different. Human brains pile down the conveyer belts waiting for their corporate-genetic identities; some are channelled into the administration syndicates, others into cyber-technology industries, and the really unlucky ones are mistakenly covered in chocolate and stuffed into boxes of Milk Tray. Thankfully it's not all change though. There's still plenty of war and violence to make your Twentieth century kid feel at home. Obviously, the goalposts have changed in terms of the enemy – Earthlings now more suited to inter-galactic bickering – but for the pilots in the Fednet Space Corps, of which you are one, there's still plenty of action.

As part of the Corp, it's your job to ensure the galaxy remains a place of relative order and security. At present it's being threatened by rebels armed to the teeth with fighter squadrons, huge cannons and a variety pack of assault missiles. Fortunately, being part of the wealthy establishment, you're given control of a Predator Mark IV attack vehicle which comes complete with its own range of weapons and defence systems.



Starfighter 3000 is at heart a shoot 'em up, although it's fair to say it has a fine pair of flight simulator lungs as well. This is at first a bit off putting. The controls are incredibly sensitive, a light tap of the joypad capable of sending your vehicle into excited swirls about the ether. Once you get used to this control method things get far less frustrating, although now and then there are still times when you wish it was a little less touchy. The flight sim element is confirmed by the way in which the action kicks off, your primary mission being simply to dock your plane in the mothership, something that proves far more difficult than you'd think. After this you are given a number of simple missions to earn your wings before you take off into outer-space to take on the enemy in greater numbers.





As Starfighter 3000 progresses it becomes more like a straight-forward shoot 'em up, the player using the map to locate targets and then making the most of their air-to-air and air-to-ground missiles in an effort complete their objectives. There are plenty of pick-ups in the way of extra energy and weapons, and quite a neat bonus system. Pick up the icons left after something has been destroyed and they rack up at the bottom of the screen in the fashion of a fruit machine – if you get a winning sequence you earn an upgrade for your ship.



There a plenty of slow and majestic explosions in Starfighter 3000, not at all like the hellish reality of blood meshed with metal and bone and the screaming! Oh the screaming!

The graphics in Starfighter 3000 are actually a bit disappointing. Everything looks very polygonised, enemies exploding in blocks, buildings all blocky triangles and squares and even the earth itself exploding like a chequered chess board. If I was feeling generous I'd say it's all part of the game's style, but I'm not so I'll say instead that it all looks a bit too much like the 3DO from which it was converted.

More than anything, Starfighter 3000 suffers from being boring. Technically it's proficient enough and the difficulty level means it's no pushover, but the action plods along with an unerring predictability, the missions varying very little from one another. As a shoot 'em up it lacks pace and easy accessibility to make it great, and as a flight sim it lacks depth. As a result, Starfighter 3000 floats about tepidly in between.

ROB



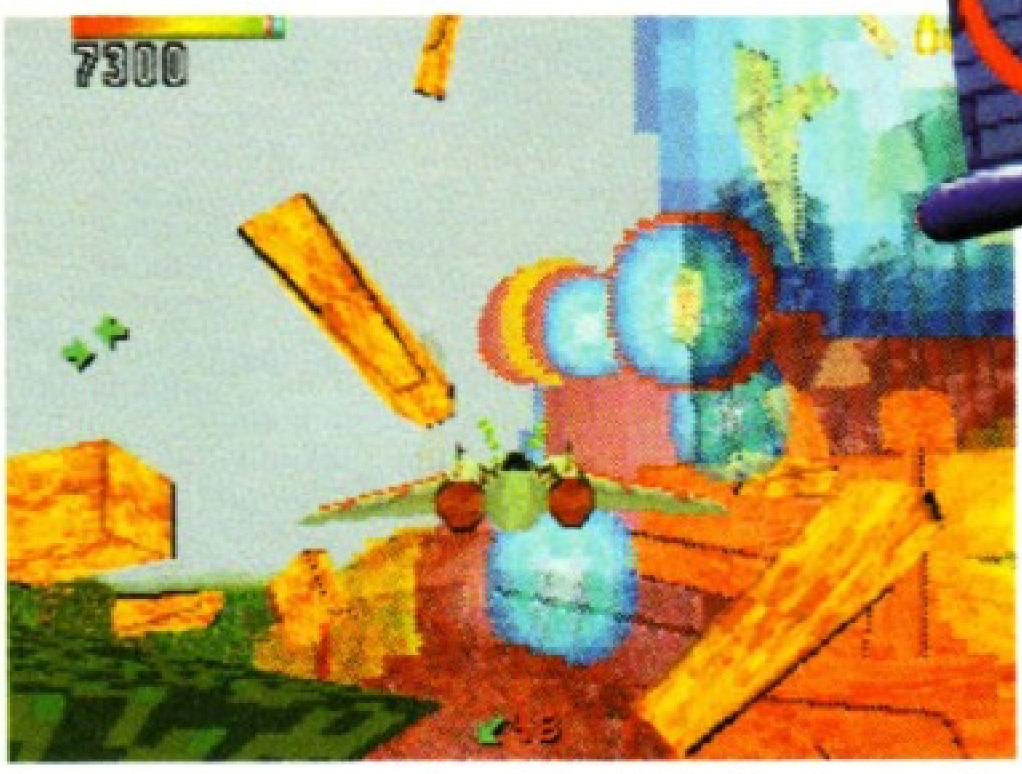






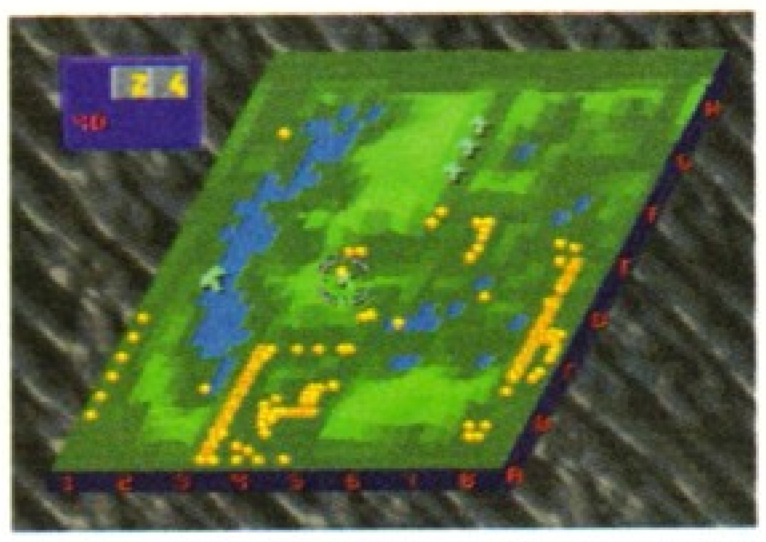


STARFIGHTER 3000



Our valiant hero ventures into the land of the floating crunchie bars...but horror! Where's the chocolate coating? Abandon ship!





Starfighter 3000 suffers from a bit of an identity crisis – not really shoot 'em up, not really flight sim – and the resultant action is a tad monotonous. Not a disaster by any means but lacking in thrills.

STAND BY YOUR WINGMAN

Players in Starfighter 3000 get a chance to order about some of their fellow Fednet pilots. One of the options lets you position the squadron's formation, adapting it to whatever situation — all together for a spot of carpet bombing, or split up to take out enemy fighters. If things get too dangerous you can always go and cower behind the mothership which will protect you with the odd laser blast in times of extreme panic.



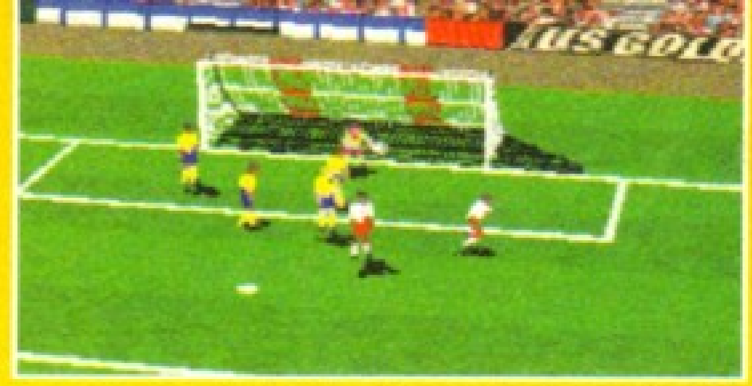
graphics	72
sound	70
playability	73
lastability	69

overall

72%





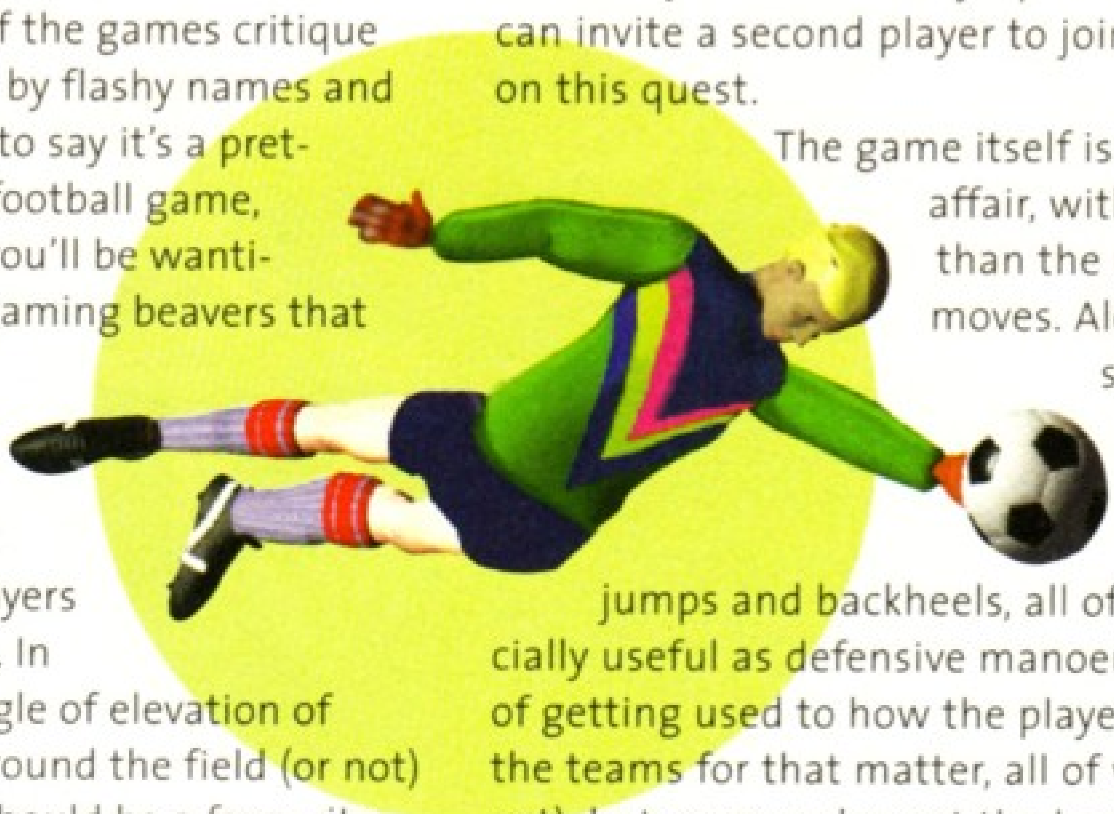


BY	US GOLD
PRICE	£39.99
STYLE	SPORTS SIMULATION
RELEASE	JULY

Oh they're football game crazy, they're football game mad, those football games they have taken away the little bit of sense they had – they're software houses, and they've got yet another soccer title out. So what's the score?

US Gold have got the right idea about licensing. At the moment everyone in the country has become strangely football obsessive, but by the time you read this the European championships will be over and all those games which depended upon the topicality of the event will be languishing in post-license deprivation. However, USG's (probably extensively pricey) license will still have months to run. Or weeks. But anyway, they certainly score points for endorsement longevity if nothing else. Although, thinking about it, if England actually win the Euro tournament, all the Euro games will sell for about a hundred million years. They'll be souvenirs.

However, here at Saturn Mag we're not arsed about this merchandising big-business business, oh no, we're The Untouchables of the games critique community, not to be swayed by flashy names and large budgets. So, other than to say it's a pretty clever idea to market your football game, we'll shut up about it. What you'll be wanting to know, inquisitive little gaming beavers that you are, is what it's like. Well, it's like almost any of the other footie games the Saturn has spawned in recent weeks. It's got twenty-two players and numerous camera angles. In fact, you able to select the angle of elevation of your camera, how it swings around the field (or not) and all sorts, meaning there should be a favourite camera angle for everyone, except really really hard to please people. The distance the camera is positioned away from the field dramatically alters the amount of the pitch you can see at any one time – and resultantly the size of the players too, from large and highly visible to titchy, almost Sensible Soccer-esque tinyness.



Indeed, Olympic Soccer is heavy on options throughout. At every point during the game you're able to access numerous options screens and change the rules and parameters of the game to suit your tastes. They're presented by way of a rather natty revolving-football-slices series of rotating icon-based menus. This makes a pleasant change from the usual text-highlighting action and is indicative of the attention lavished upon making Olympic Soccer look professional.





The same proliferative attitude to choices pervades the play modes too. There's Arcade mode, where your selected team fights through from the most feeble contenders to the top-ranking players in a knock-out stylee. There's two-player head-to-head, which is self explanatory. There's also the Olympic mode, which splits all the contenders into groups and plays them off in the same way as the real Olympics. You can invite a second player to join you on this quest.



The game itself is a side-on view affair, with slightly more than the usual number of moves. Along with passing, shooting and chipping Olympic players are masters of dives, jumps and backheels, all of which are especially useful as defensive manoeuvres. It takes a bit of getting used to how the players operate (and the teams for that matter, all of which are different), but once you've got the hang of things Olympic Soccer proves itself to be a speedy and challenging conversion of the popular grass sport.

The trouble is that it's arrived a little late in the day, after the mighty Power Soccer and the even mightier Euro '96, along with a slew of less prestigious titles. Olympic Soccer is certainly above the average standard for the crowd, but the biggest likelihood is that if you're after a soccer game you'll already have scooped one of the big two. Whilst Olympic Soccer does stand up in terms of playability it's hardly the most technically impressive or innovative title in the arena, and that goes against it in the current gaming environment. It also makes the now-standard mistake of dragging a famous commentator in to sample about three different phrases, which are then repeated robotically throughout the match until you inevitably turn them off.

Whilst I don't think anyone who bought Olympic Soccer would be disappointed with it, I do have a feeling that most gamers would rather go for Euro '96 – not merely because it looks better, but because there's more to it. However, this is a fine effort from US Gold and let's hope they find more use for this excellent game engine. Give it a go, but compare it to a couple of competitors before making a purchasing decision.

RAD



The players flee in terror as a giant Shearer towers above the pitch, reaching to the heavens to grasp the Goodyear Blimp on his destructive trail!













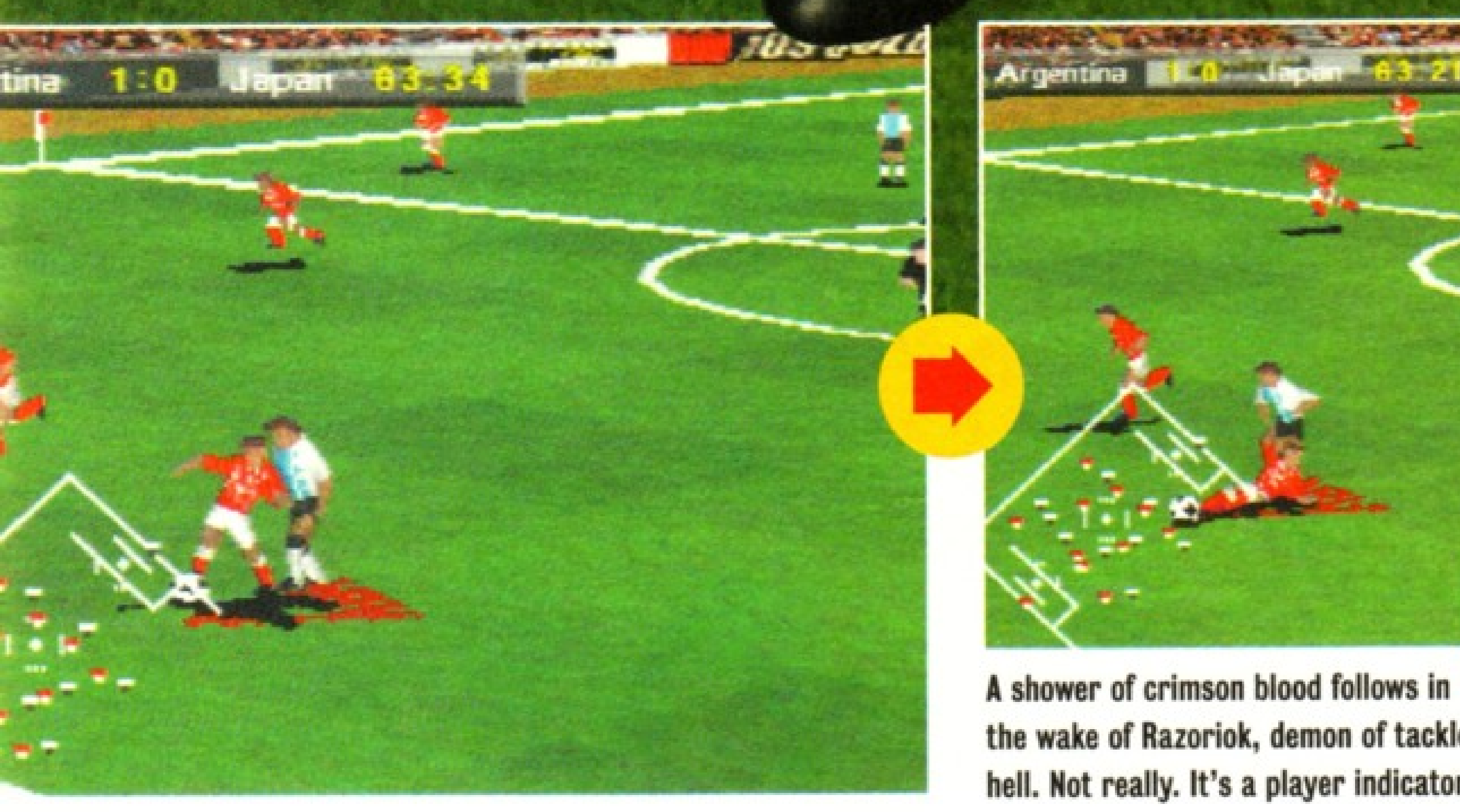
(ABOVE) Too right, the ref's hair is pretty awful. He looks like someone's melted butter all over his scalp.
(LEFT) This might look like some drunken player falling over while in possession but it is in fact an overhead kick.

LET'S SEE THAT AGAIN AND AGAIN AND AGAIN...

Akin to many sports games, and fighting games, and racing games – look, nearly all games these days – Olympic Soccer is equipped with its very own replay facility. This may be turned on or off at any point before or during a game, and once working produces an instant replay of every goal scored. If that isn't enough for you, you can also pause the game and call up a replay of the last few seconds of action whenever you want. Doing this also allows you to alter the camera angle and speed of the replay, and rewind it as many times as you like. If you're really sad.



OLYMPIC SOCCER



A shower of crimson blood follows in the wake of Razoriok, demon of tackle hell. Not really. It's a player indicator.



A very decent soccer game indeed, but Olympic Soccer is up against some of the stiffest competition the genre has ever offered. Good fun certainly, but perhaps not the best example on the market.

graphics	78
sound	79
playabil-	86
lastabil-	85

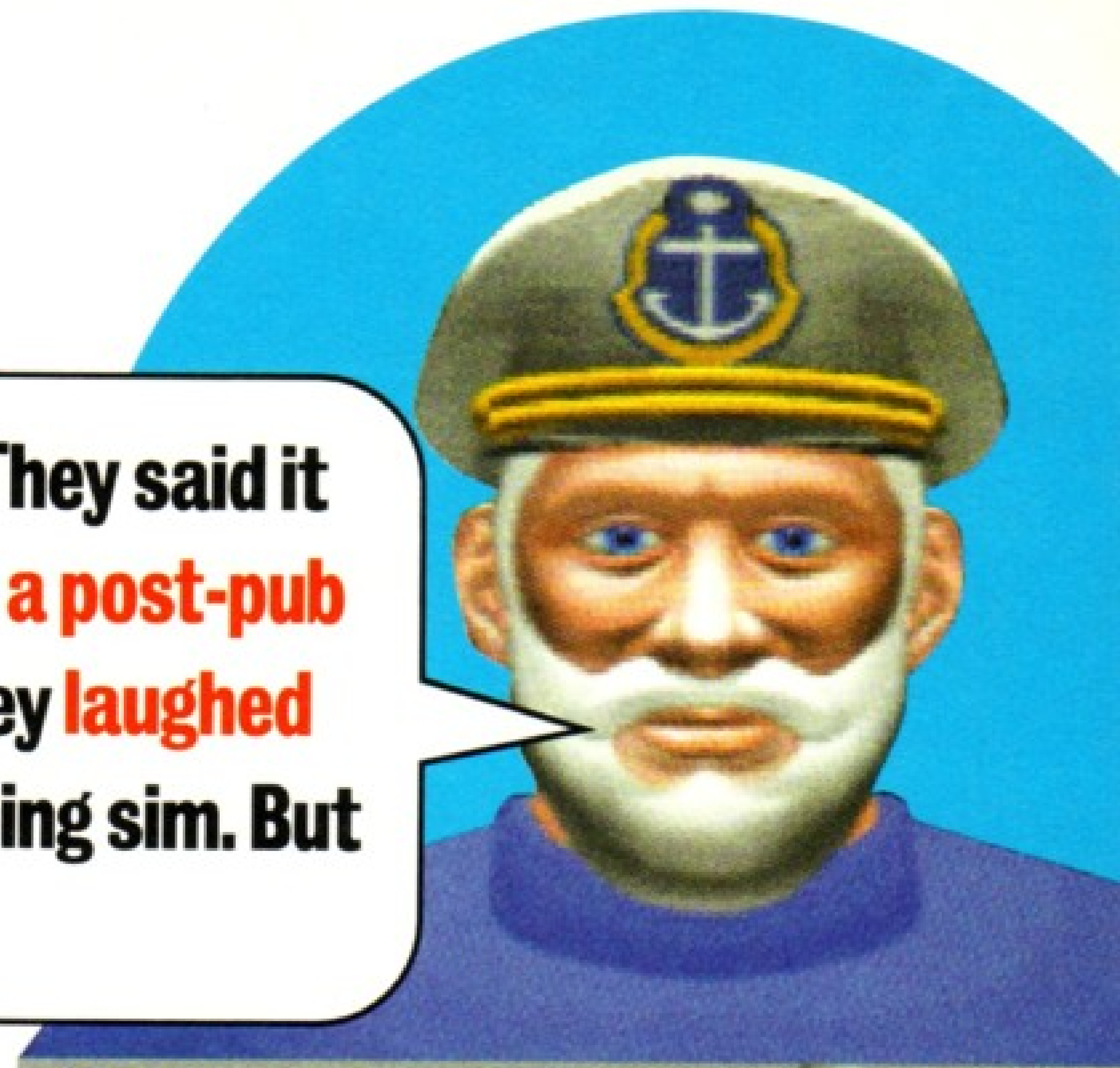
overall

85%

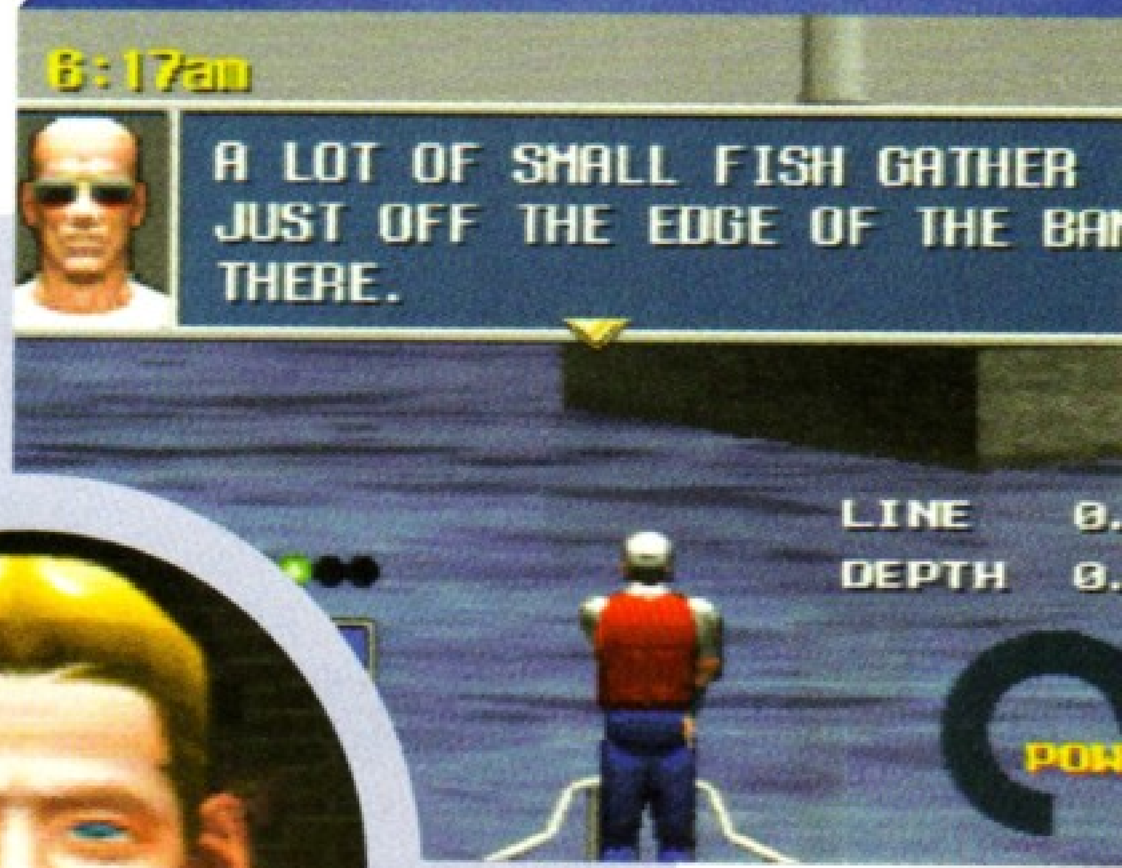
REVIEW

BY	JVC
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	SPORTS SIM
RELEASE	OUT NOW

They said it couldn't be done. They said it made about as much sense as a post-pub interview with Oliver Reed. They laughed and jeered at the idea of a fishing sim. But by thunder they were wrong!









Fishing happens to be one of the most popular pastimes in Britain believe it or not. Many a soul finds a touch of karmic quietude sitting on a river bank casting away, or wading through a velvety stream, lost to the hypnotic ebb and flow of water. In fact, for many, catching a fish simply adds a little peripheral excitement to the day. Obviously a fishing sim can't be quite as pastoral and romantic as this, and Sea Bass Fishing fills in the scenic gaps by putting the player in the role of champion angler — well, potential champion at least. Rather than a brook tucked away deep in the Shires, the fishing takes place along estuaries or out at sea, with competitors clambering after boats and captains to take them to the renowned fishing hotspots.

You can forget things like maggots or fly fishing as well, because in the hunt for the elusive Sea Bass, players make use of 'lures' instead. A lure, in case you don't know, is a metal bait that looks like a fish and is designed quite literally to lure a fish. Using a lure involves mastering a technique where, rather than simply leaving the bait in the water and waiting for a bite, you have to constantly reel it in to the attract the lively fish.



There are lots of other things the perceptive angler will want to take into account as well like the weather conditions — rainy weather for example makes the fish very active — and the tide which affects the number of fish likely to be drifting about. Having to learn all this stuff, as well as the various techniques involved in bringing a fish in, are what makes Sea Bass Fishing fun to play at the outset, even if you're not catching much. It's kind of like learning the rules of American football by playing John Madden's.

Once you feel fairly happy with your technique there's the chance to start playing in the tournaments. For rookies there's the amateur tournament which only lasts over a day and involves a more mediocre standard of angling. If that starts to get too easy then it's time to move on to the top pro tournament which is spread out over three days. For those experts who can reel enough sea bass in to feed the five thousand, the Sea Bass Classic tournament will decide which is the messiah among them.

Before you head off to one of the many destinations on offer, there's a decision to be made regarding who's going to captain your boat. There are three captains to choose from, and to be honest I didn't really notice a great deal of difference between them, apart from the rather obvious fact that one looks like Captain Birdseye, one resembles Sarah Bryant from VF2 and the other looks like Kojak. They act as advisers — telling you the best spot to cast your line, suggesting different lures and forecasting on the kind of fish you can expect to be coasting about.

Despite the fact that the sea bass is the fish in favour, there are loads of other types out there if you fancy catching them, things like mullet, tuna, eel, yellow tail and lots of fish peculiar to Japanese waters alone. Once you haul one in it's weighed and measured by your captain and goes down in your log book. You can even fish for dolphins, although before everyone mounts a protest, I should add that it's a dolphin fish rather than the Flipper variety.

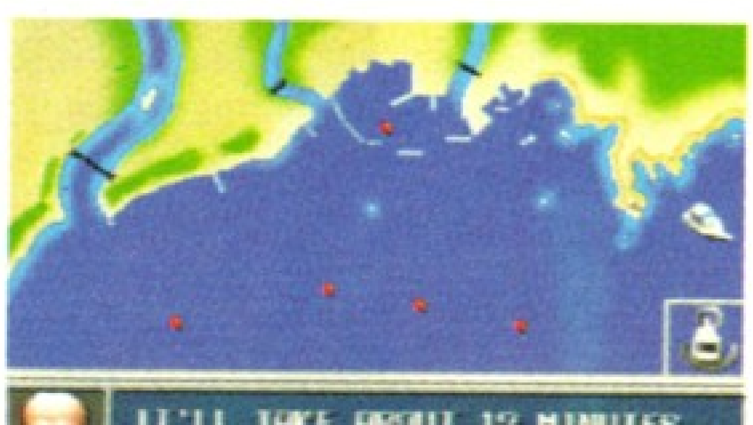
One thing should be stressed when talking about a game like this though, is the rather limited fan base it's likely to have. Once you're casting away there isn't a great deal to feast your eyes on, and what there is, isn't exactly spectacular. Quite a lot of people will look at this game and think it's a bit of a novel waste of time, in much the same fashion as some people would despise golfing games (the control method in Sea Bass Fishing actually involves some similarities) or RPG's. I thought it had a certain charm though, especially considering the fact that, after playing it, I felt I'd learnt something about fish and fishing. In addition to this, I was impressed by the intelligent way the programmers handled what has to be one of the most uncompromising sports in terms of its incompatibility with the console.

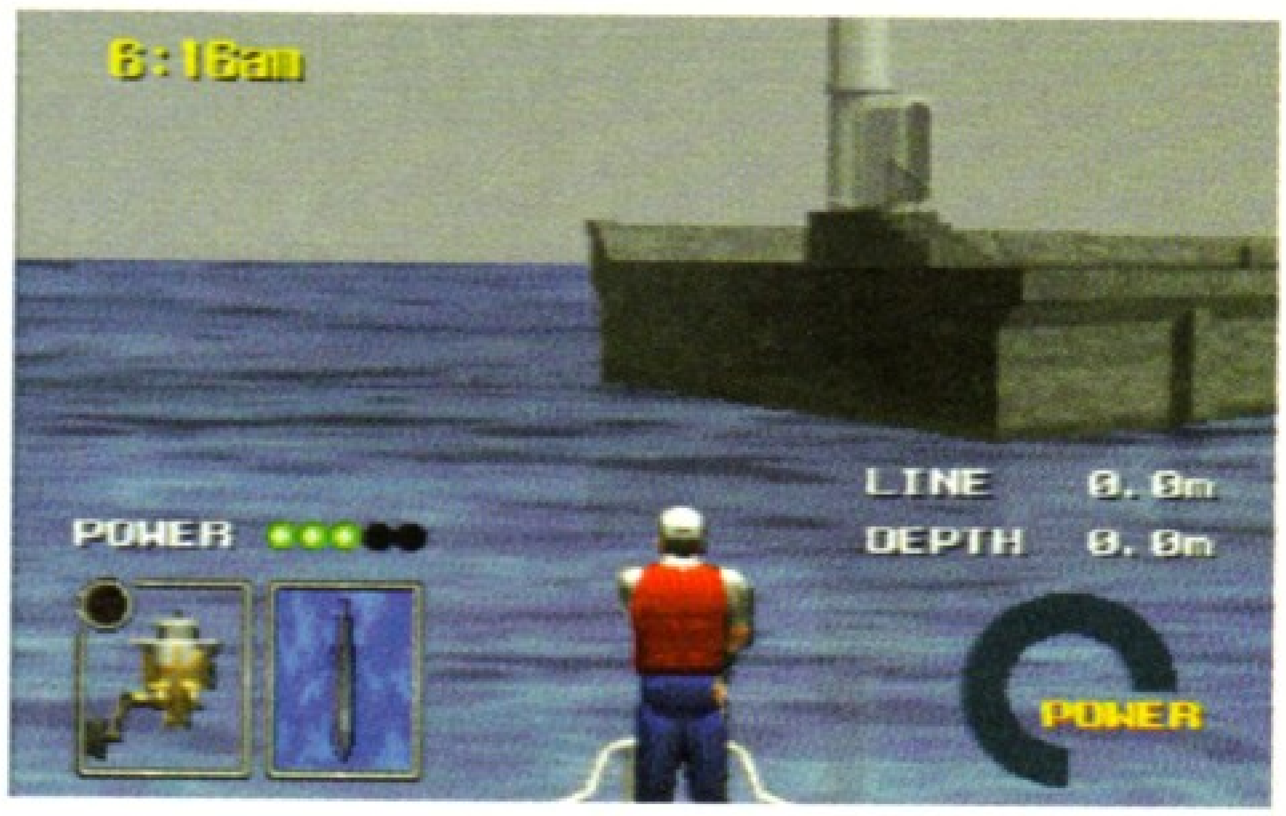
ROB



By moving the rod from one side to the other as you reel it in, you stand a better chance of getting a quick bite.



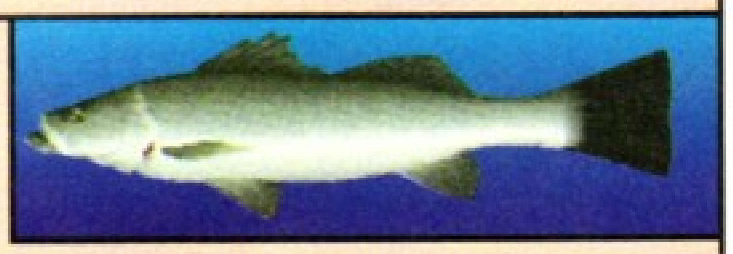




PLENTY MORE FISH IN THE SEA

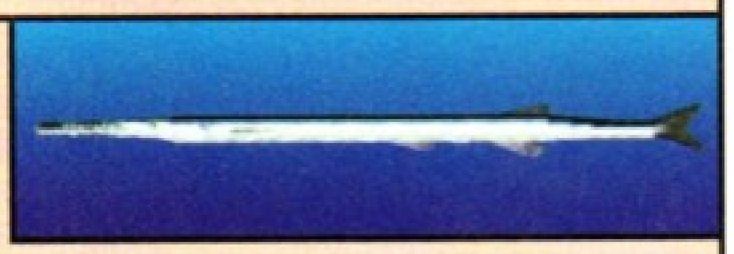
You know, sometimes people stop me in the street and say "Rob. The mullet - what do you make of it?" I then spend the next couple of hours taking them through the finer points of the species. As I will now...

SEA BASS



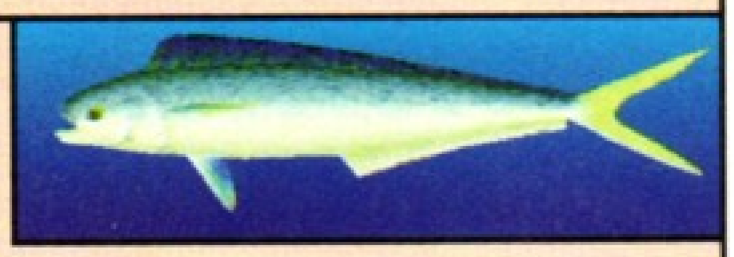
This is the one that everyone wants. They tend to hang out near sandy beaches or the river mouth.

DATSU



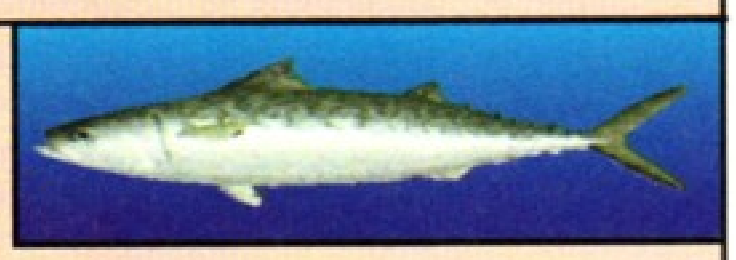
These fish, peculiar to Japanese waters are normally found in the shallows along the coast.

DOLPHIN



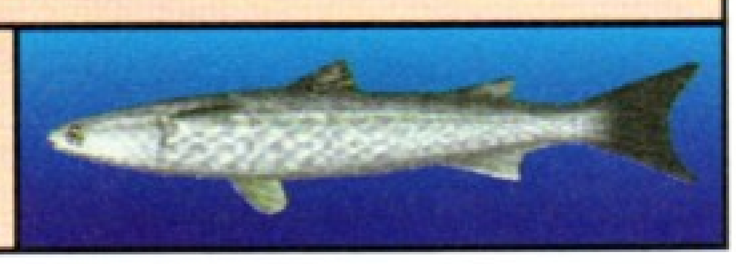
Pretty unusual fish this one, and catching it involves using a unique rod. Difficult to catch I tell you.

MACKEREL



Mackerel tend to swim just about anywhere and at any depth but near rocks is a good spot to look.

MULLET



While this fish doesn't feed on small fish, it's still stupid enough to go for a lure.





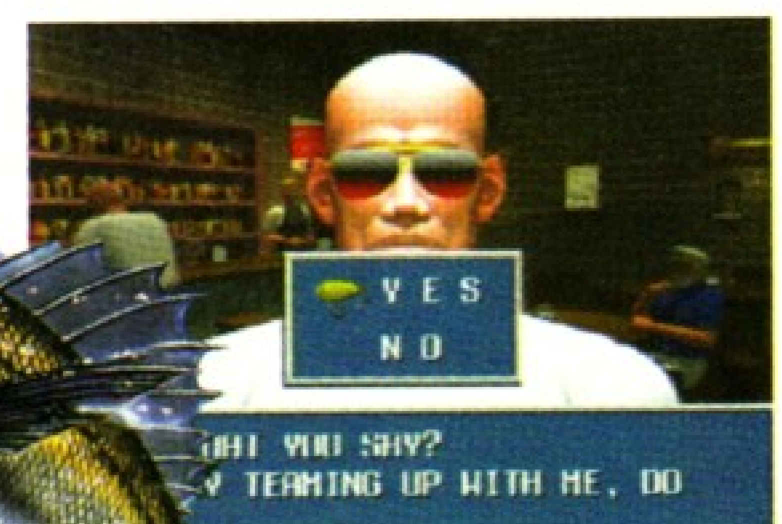
Choosing which area to fish in affects the kind of fish you're likely to catch. The area on this map that isn't highlighted is for professionals.



(Above) These are your lures. Their colour, size and propensity to either float or sink will determine the kind of fish you'll catch.

Sea Bass FISHING





That's right, after giving up a life on the San Francisco police force, Kojak became a fish guru of the most eminent order.



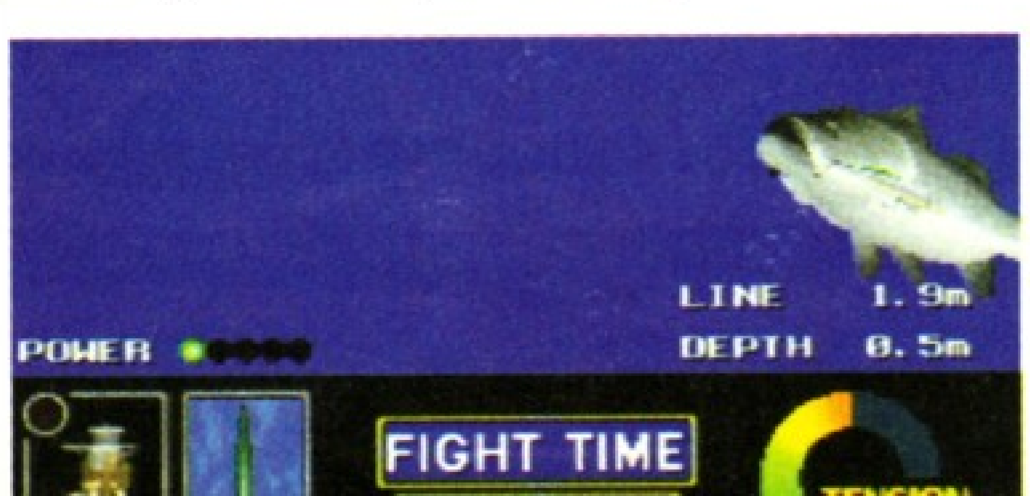
CATCHING A FISH

So just how is it done then, catching a fish? The control method shares a little in common with golf. The power gauge on the bottom right of the screen is used to variate the distance of the cast and also the tension on the line. Once you hook a fish you want to keep a degree of tension on the line to stop the fish wriggling out of the lure. But be warned, if there's too much tension the line will snap. You might want to use additional techniques for especially troublesome fish like keeping the rod down to prevent the fish from blowing through its gills to release the hook. Why exactly this works I don't know but who cares so long as that fish makes it to the net.





It's often worth checking up on the radio to see where other fisherman are out and about and whether there's better catches elsewhere. But here this – once the rumour goes about that there's big fish to be had, it's a riot I tell you.

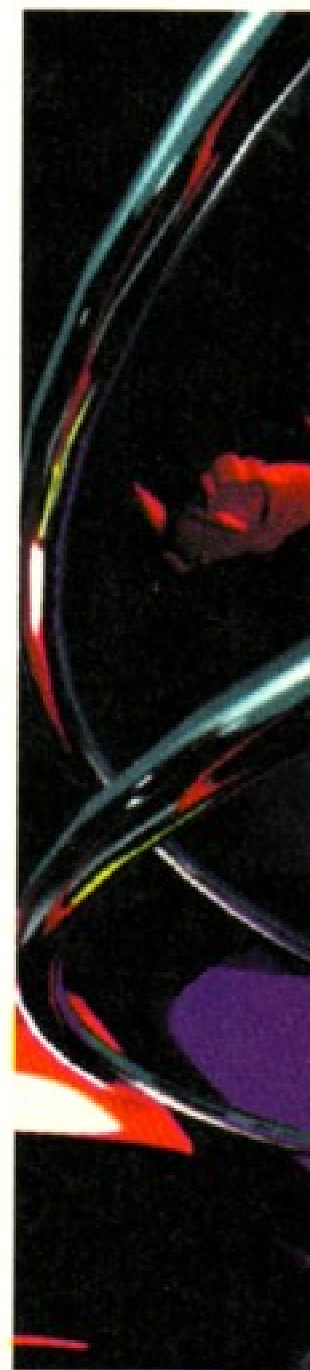


This certainly won't appeal to everyone, but for those of you with an eye turned to the serene and the bizarre, Sea Bass Fishing could be just your prime fillet!

graphics	72
sound	75
playability	80
lastability	81
overall	80%

BY	EMPIRE
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	PINBALL SIM
RELEASE	AUGUST

Well what do you want me to say eh? It's a pinball sim isn't it. I mean, what can I say? It's pinball, the well-known game involving a ball and flippers, and things that flash and ping. And err, well, a table, oh yea, a table. That's it. Pinball...errr

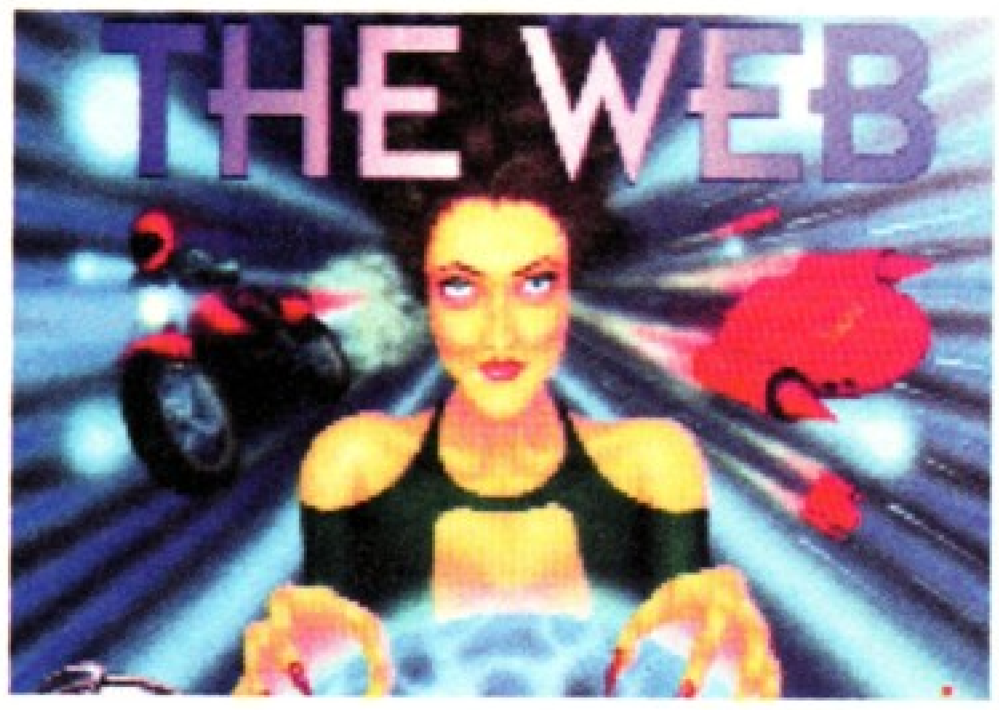


It's a debate that rages along the annals of the most prestigious oak panelled corridors. It's caused malicious fights between eminent political overlords in pipe-musked studies. And it's the reason the world still lives under the shadow of nuclear Armageddon. That's right – pinball sims: genuine console experience or a bit of a con?

Whichever side you stand on the pinball sim debate, one thing's for sure and that's a pinball sim's inevitably static quality. If you want to make a pinball game as realistic as possible there's not really much you can do in the way of alternative gameplay. You can hardly expect special attack moves, virtual racing sequences or mine cart levels. Where pinball is concerned, what you see is very much what you get. This is true of Pro Pinball more than most other pinball sims, featuring as it does, simply the one table. Whether this was a bit of an oversight where the programmers were concerned, or whether it was because Pro Pinball started out as a PC title (where you could probably update and change the table with add on disks), is largely irrelevant. For Saturn owners, one table it is and unfortunately the game suffers a bit as a result. With something like True Pinball the player at least has the chance to master four different tables.This however is the only real criticism I have of Pro Pinball. Purists might even argue that it's a bit of an unfair one considering the fact that playing pinball generally consists of only one table anyway. But then, if I'd wanted pinball as realistic as that I'd probably opt for the thing itself.







The plot – or rather the theme – in Pro Pinball involves intrigue on the internet, the title screen revealing a dark mysterious woman, eyes full of tyrannical destiny and hands probing at what looks like giant spearmint lozenge. It's presumably her silky tones on the voice-over telling you about that extra bonus ball you just got or that the game's over. And to satisfy other meanings in the subtitle, 'The Web', there's also a spider knocking about in there somewhere. But when it comes to the crunch this is classic pinball stuff with the player trying to get the ball over ramps, along wire rails, through tunnels and rebounding off bumpers.



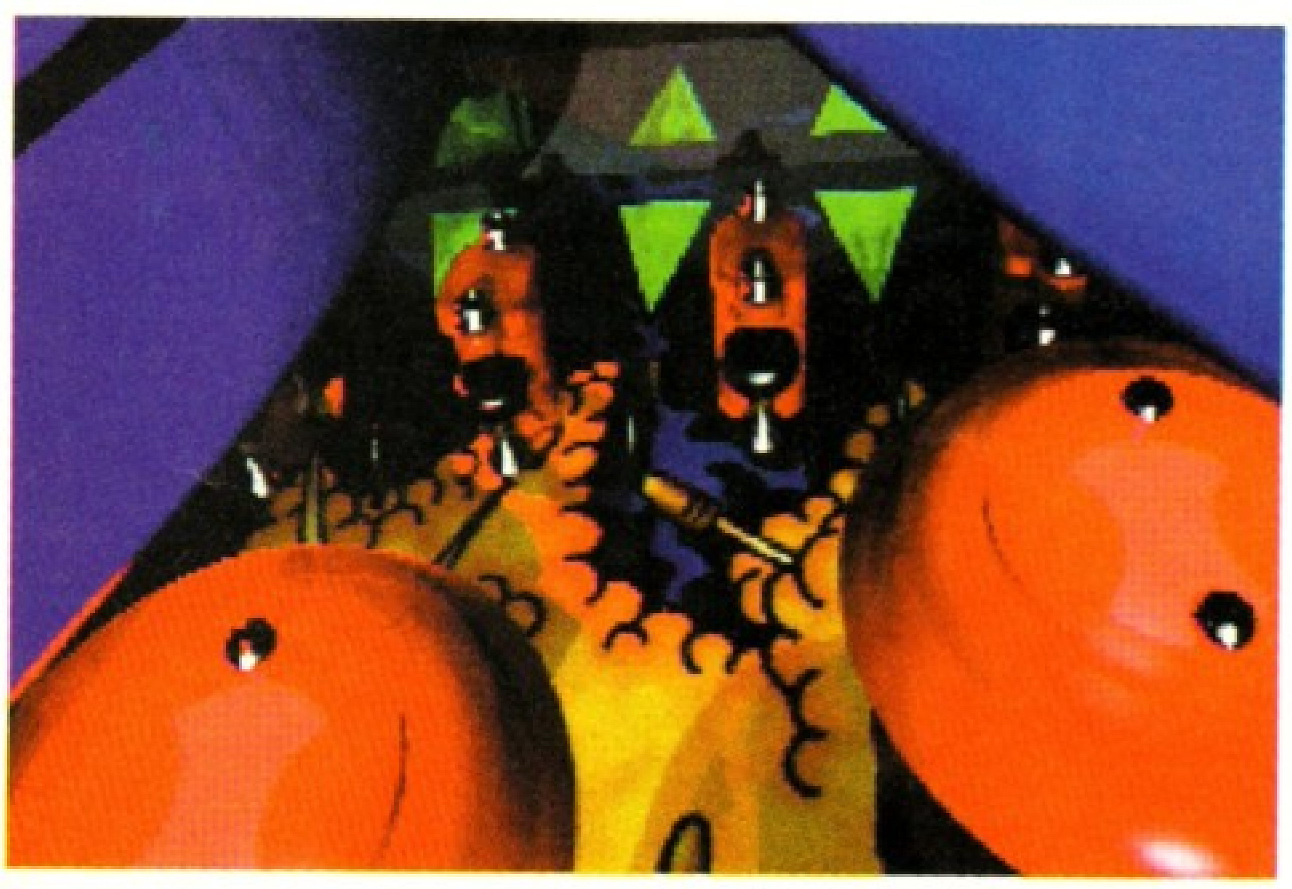
There are bonus games which are displayed on the mock dot matrix screen at the back of the table and some of them are good fun. For example, there's one where you have to use the flipper buttons to explode approaching mines but avoid destroying the numbers that also float towards you. There's also other stuff like sequences involving multi-ball action where three or four balls go rolling round the table enabling you to really rack up the points.

The most fundamentally important thing with pinball games is naturally a realistic sense of inertia on the ball and as far as that's concerned there are no complaints with Pro Pinball. This, coupled with the right kind of sensitivity on the flippers, means players have the chance to perfect their skills, but can still suffer a spot of bad luck from the erratic movement of the ball.

All in all, this is a decent enough interpretation of the game itself, let down only by the exclusion of different tables to variate the action a little.

ROB





Ever since I was a young boy, I've played the silver ball...no! No! No! NO! I refuse to do it! I will not be so predictably bland! Instead I'd like to talk about how pop culture constitutes, as Foucault would put it, a definitive transition in...





FACT 1

In 1979 a game by Williams called 'Flash' was the first pinball machine to use electronic sound effects. Bally's pinball game, Xenon, was the first that talked, featuring the voice of Suzanna Ciani. What she's famous for is anyone's guess.

Pro Pinball The Web





FACT 2

In 1966, the company, Bally, introduced 'zipper flippers' which closed together preventing the ball from leaving the playing area. Rather unsurprisingly they quickly lost their popularity and were scrapped after a few years.









Pinball; the first chance cafe for many a child bunking school, but don't bunk off school ok? Those R.E. lessons will prove invaluable when you finally have to submit to a job.



The bells, the buzzers, the lights! And that's just in my head you know!



It's Bruce Foxton and Jake Burns, ex-The Jam and Stiff Little Fingers respectively.

FACT 3

In 1942 pinball was declared illegal in New York City, and it was not rescinded until 1976. Likewise, pinball was not legalised in Los Angeles until 1972. Exactly what the reasons are for this remain unclear. Maybe the game was considered too addictive, which is kind of hilarious when you think of some of the addictions you get in New York and LA today.



Oh yes! Choose which angle you'd like to play Pro Pinball from according to your height. Dwarfs = low, and, well, guess the rest.



FACT 4

Whiffle and Whoopee, that's what the first pinball games were called back in 1931. They weren't exactly pinball games as we know them, they were actually called bagatelle games, the ball dropping into holes to score points, but they shared the same basic characteristics.



Pinball is pinball when it's all said and done, and this certainly is pinball. Some extra tables would have been nice though.

graphics	77
sound	80
playability	70
lastability	68

overall

70%





GUARDIAN HEROES

PLAYER'S GUIDE



The fabulous Guardian Heroes is now available to purchase, and once snugly spinning in your Saturn, you too can experience the manic wonder of this classic from the collective genius at Treasure. In one last ditch attempt to hack through to the forests of Thrangor, DAVID HODGSON presents all the cheats and tips found to date.

HERO CHEATS APLENTY!!

The Japanese version of the game (but in no other versions, sadly) boasts numerous features and gameplaying delights for your heightened pleasure. Let's run through some of them, shall we? Firstly you've got the debug mode, which is activated by highlighting the top option (the dip switch) and pressing A+C+Y together. As if by magic, a new Debug option appears 'ping!' at the bottom of the screen.

Enter the new screen, and all of the options are in English (handy for those without Japanese script knowledge), and from this screen, many fine options can be tweaked. All characters are available in verses mode, a level select appears in story mode, you can max out your character in story mode, and the collision detection boxes can be shown by pausing the game and pressing L. Want to refill your energy? Then press X+Y+Z during story mode.

Finally, here's a stage skip during story mode:

Forward one stage:	R+Start
Forward two stages:	R+A+Start
Forward three stages:	R+B+Start
Forward four stages:	R+C+Start
Back one stages:	R+L+Start
Back two stages:	R+L+A+Start
Back three stages:	R+L+B+Start
Back four stages:	R+L+C+Start







UK SECRETS HAVE BEEN DISCOVERED!

There's a number of interesting little tid-bits to discover in the English version of the game too! First of all, try finding the hidden Coliseum; the finest way to build up party experience. From stage one, take the third or fourth choice, begin the level and turn right as soon as possible, jump to the distant plane and wander until you reach a small wooden signpost. This will take you to the Coliseum where loads of hardened troops can be culled!









ALL FOR ONE

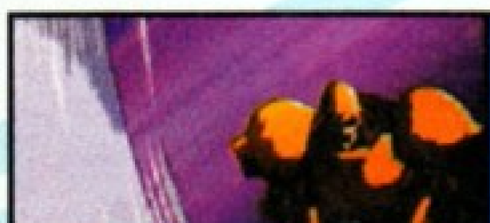
A total of 45 characters are available to be selected, and you'll have to find every single level in order to save them all to your memory. After a mammoth playtest you'll soon find most of the heroes, but three characters may still elude you; Super Han, Selena and The Undead Hero. Super Han becomes available after you've tramped through the first level, taken the third choice on the second level and the second choice of path. Find the Undead warrior with one arm and kill him. After this, you can pick up his weapon, turning Han into a huge hulking brute!! Next is the sexy Selena who becomes part of the team after you've completed the game for the first time, and the Undead chap can only be controlled after you've found everybody else! Happy hunting!

SUPER HAN



Wielding a huge two-handed sword, the suped-up version of Han can plough through any foe!

THE UNDEAD HERO



From the lower vaults of the crypt of terror, this agent of death rises to help our heroes! Hooray!

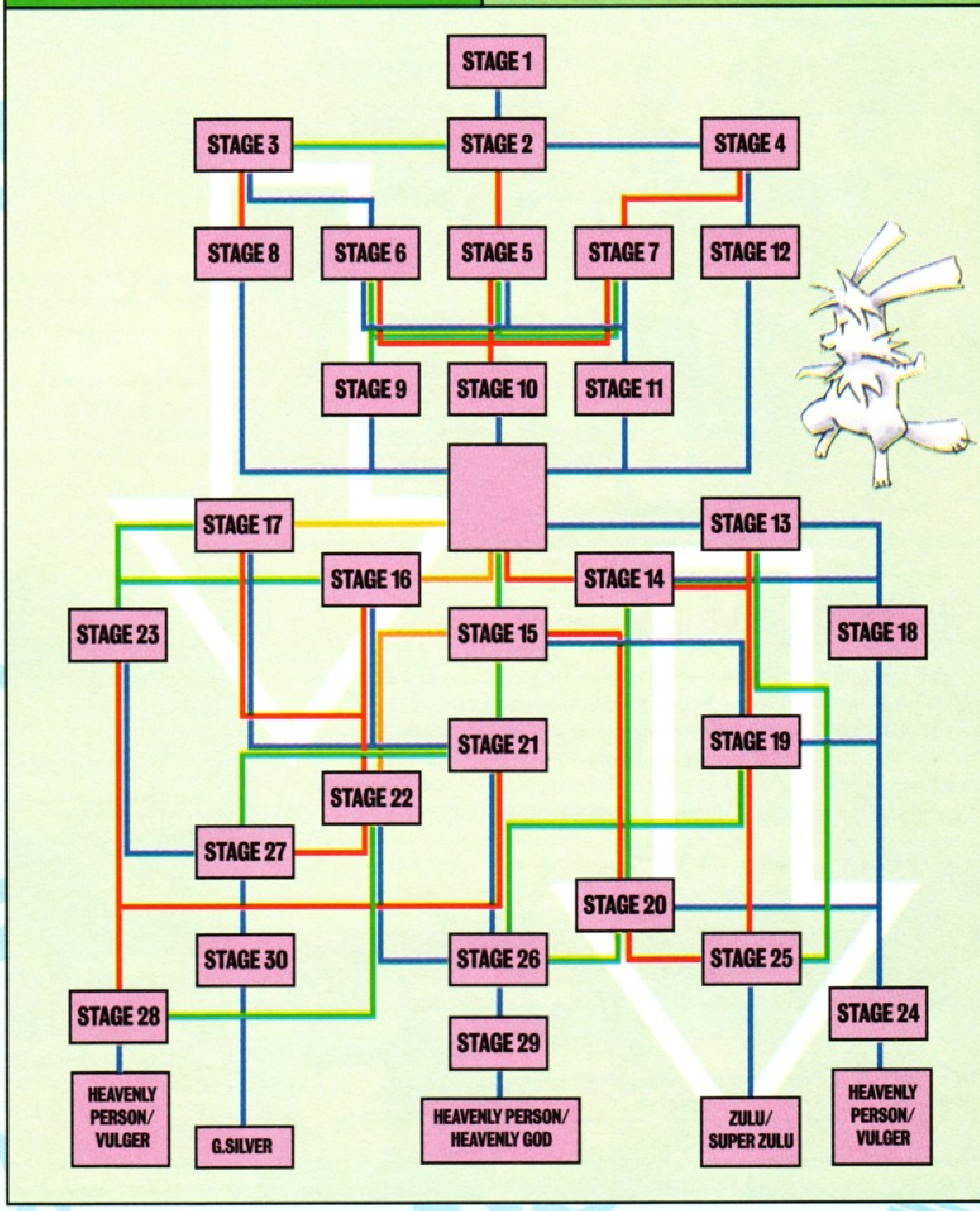
SELENA



Striding into the fray clad in bright crimson armour, she is a fast and powerful amazon queen!

Want to know the easiest place to find *all* the heroes? Well follow this table during your adventuring and you'll soon be able to choose a whole army of chaps!

1st CHOICE | 2nd CHOICE | 3rd CHOICE | 4th CHOICE | 5th CHOICE





F SELECTABLE CHARACTERS ONCE YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE GAME.

2 THE STAGE AT WHICH THE CHARACTER CAN BE FOUND. (E.G. Stage 2)

★ SELECTABLE WHEN ALL THE OTHER CHARACTERS HAVE BEEN COLLECTED.

TIPS

Tips



Razor Ramon can perform the biggest combo of the lot – 24 hits in a row! It's good to look at and does loads of damage.

WWF WRESTLEMANIA

Each character can perform some incredible multiple-hit combos, but they take some learning. Here are some of the best for each character.
When your COMBO bar is lit up, you must first get your opponent in a headlock and tap Forward twice. Then press the first button in the combination to start it off, and tap the next in the sequence repeatedly. As soon as the second move begins, start pressing the next button repeatedly. Keep doing this until the sequence is complete. It takes some practice but is well worth it.
Also, to get a character selected for you at random, press Up and Start together on the character select screen.

KEY

PP	POWER PUNCH	P	PUNCH	PK	POWER KICK	K	KICK

RAZOR RAMON



16-hit	K, P, PP, PK, K
21-hit	PP, P, K, PP
21-hit	PP, P, PP, PK, K, PP
24-hit	PP, P, K, PK, PP

THE UNDERTAKER



14-hit	K, PK, PP, P
17-hit	PK, K, PP, P, K, PK
17-hit	PK, K, P, PP, PK
21-hit	PK, K, P, PP, PK

SHAWN MICHAELS



16-hit	K, PK, PP, P
17-hit	P, PP, PK, K, Block
17-hit	P, PP, PK, P, Block
20-hit	K, PK, PP, P, Block

LEX LUGER



17-hit	K, PK, PP, P, K
19-hit	PK, K, P, PP, PK, Block

BAM BAM BIGELOW



19-hit	P, PP, PK, K, P
20-hit	PP, P, K, PK, P
22-hit	P, PP, K, PK, PP

DOINK



16-HIT	PK, PP, P, K
18-HIT	PP, PK, K, P, PP, PK
19-HIT	PK, PP, P, PK, K

BRET HART



12-hit	P, PP, PK, K
13-hit	P, PP, P, K, PK
16-hit	PK, PP, P
16-hit	PK, PP, P, K, PK, P

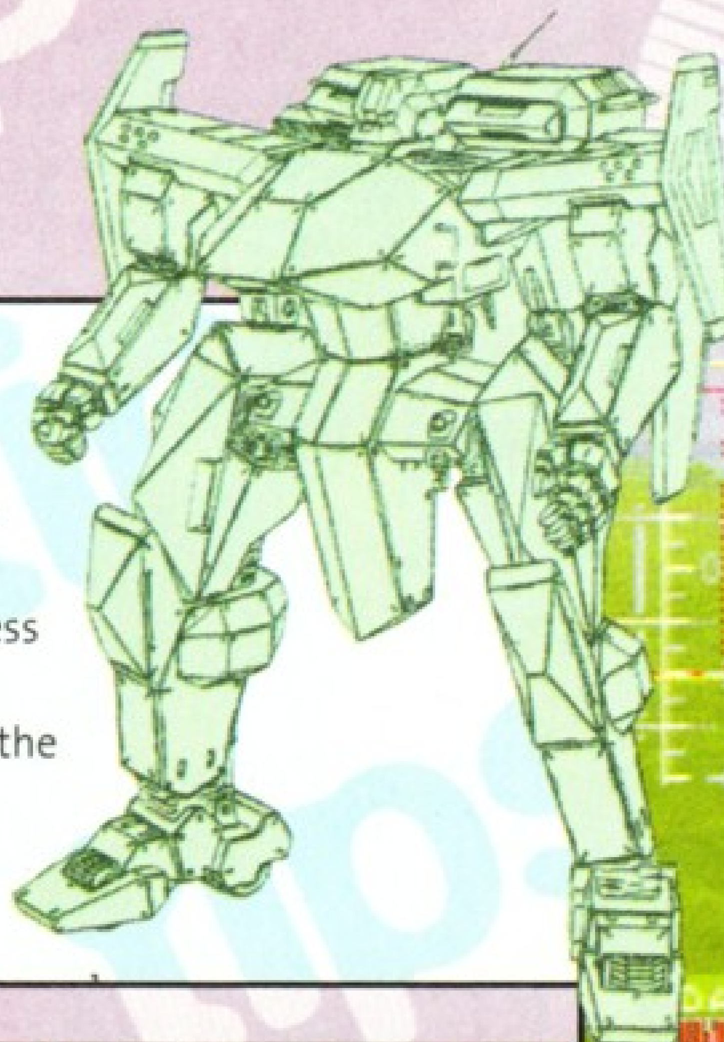
YOKOZUNA



10-hit	PK, K, P, PP, PK
13-hit	P, PP, PK, K, PP, P







GUNGRIFFON

These cheats should all be entered on the title screen when the "Press Start" message is showing.
To remove the auto aiming and the target marker, press Left, Right, C, A, Start.
To make the game harder by increasing the power of the enemy attacks, press Down, C, C, A, Start.
To make the radar only show friendly targets, press B, B, B, Down, C, Start.



OPERATION BLACKFIRE

Enter all of these cheats on the title screen:
For full fuel and energy, press L, A, Z, Y, A, Down, Down. Then press Start twice during the game to refill.
To get a level skip, press and hold these buttons in order: C, B, A, Up, L. Then release them in this order: A, C, L, Up. Now, when playing, hold A, B, C, and Up, then press L to skip a stage.
For invincibility, press and hold A, B, and C, then release them in this order: C, B, A. Now press B, A, B, Y, then hold X. Now press Up, then hold Down and release X.









Rubbish pilots need worry no more. Just use these cheats to save yourself.

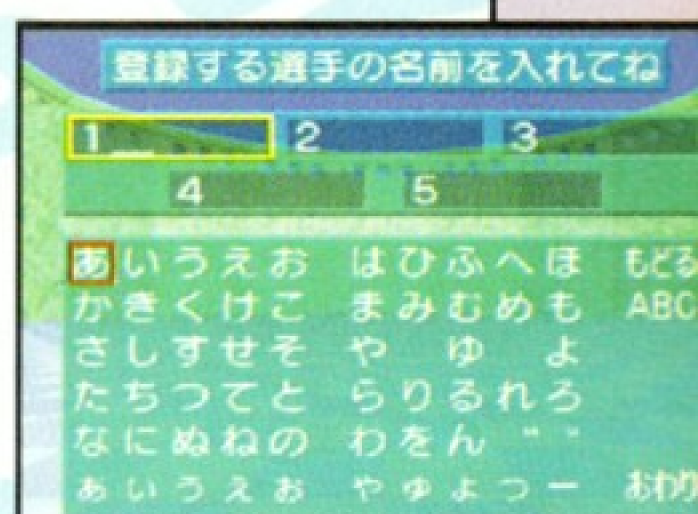
BAKU BAKU ANIMAL

One of the options not usually available in the UK version of the game is the league mode. To access it, go to the title screen and press B, A, C, Up, B, A, C, Up, then press Start. The new option will now appear. The only problem with it is that it hasn't been translated from Japanese and is very difficult to understand. Another added bonus for the UK version only is that there's a hidden dance remix of the Baku Baku Animal music on the game CD! To hear it, go to the Saturn's CD player and play track 24!



The bangin' bass of the happenin' hardcore choon pumps the balls to the max!





Unfortunately, the hidden League Mode hasn't been translated from Japanese and is therefore a bit difficult to understand. Unless you're Japanese, of course.

ARCADE TIPS

MANX TT SUPERBIKE

This is one of the best cheats you've ever seen in a video game! It lets you play the game as usual, only you're all racing on sheep instead of superbikes! Follow these instructions carefully to access it:

1. Go to the transmission select screen
2. Press Up shift twice, then Down shift twice
3. Bank the bike Left then Right
4. Pull the brake, then accelerate

You'll hear a sound and when you start you'll be racing on a bleating sheep!

OUT NOW

GAME OF THE MONTH



GUNGRIFFON

BY	SEGA
PRICE	£39.99
RATING	★★★★

We've been raving about this title for months now, and when it was first released in Japan, it seemed as though Sega Europe were a little reluctant to give it a UK release, probably due to it's niche appeal. But, someone down at their HQ has obviously had a change of heart, as it's been deigned a release this month (albeit in a somewhat rushed style). Anyway, if you fancy the idea of climbing inside a huge robot then smashing seven shades out of another, equally huge robot opponent, then this could be your ticket to the gaming version of those sumo wrestler fighting things that you see at the fair.

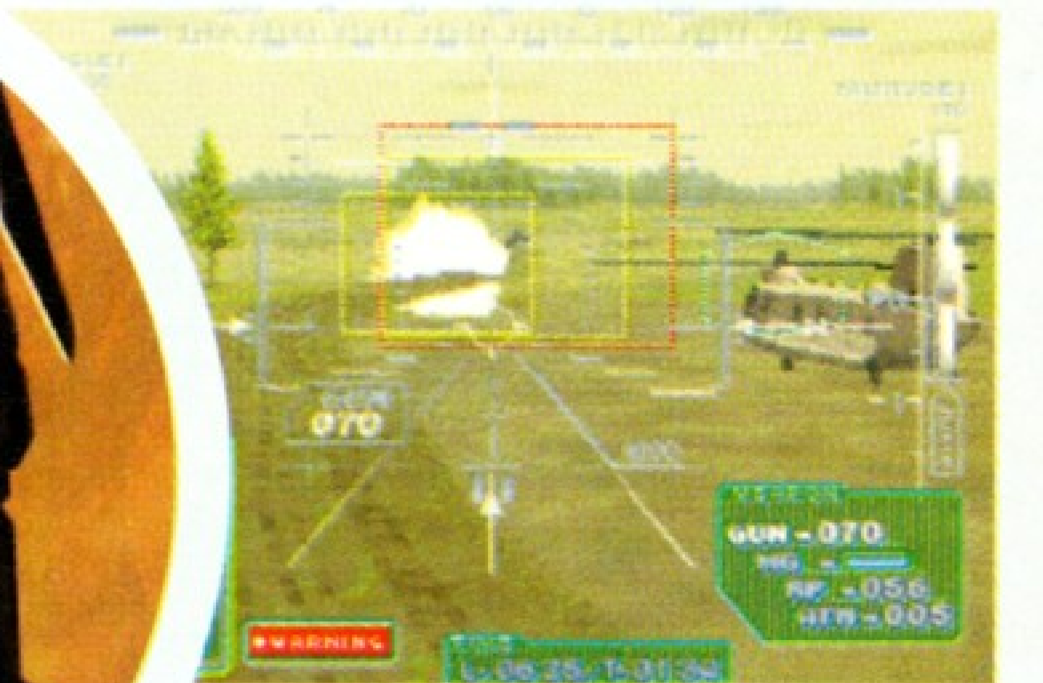
Luckily, there's nothing like this already released on the Saturn and as well as being a pretty original title for the machine, it's also one of the best games of its type around. The graphics are really impressive, with huge, clunking robots and spectacular over the top explosions! There's plenty of missions to complete, each with a different terrain and set of tactics to be used and each with a different array of robots.

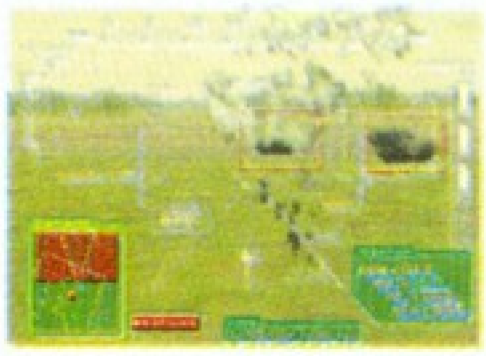
In fact, the only thing that lets Gungriffon down is its slightly awkward control method, although a after a couple of plays even this becomes much easier to handle. Anyway, the game's brilliant atmosphere more than makes up for the slightly cumbersome controls, and when you launch explosions on to the enemy you really feel like you're causing some damage.

Gungriffon isn't for everyone, especially people who want to be able to get into a game immediately and can't be bothered learning a new set of controls. But if you can persevere for even a couple of goes, you'll soon get used to it, and after that all you'll be bothered about is the size of your explosions! Absolutely unmissable for any strategy or complete carnage freak, and pretty essential for everyone else too.

Gungriffon? The man from Sega Saturn Magazine, he say YES! And very fruity it is too.

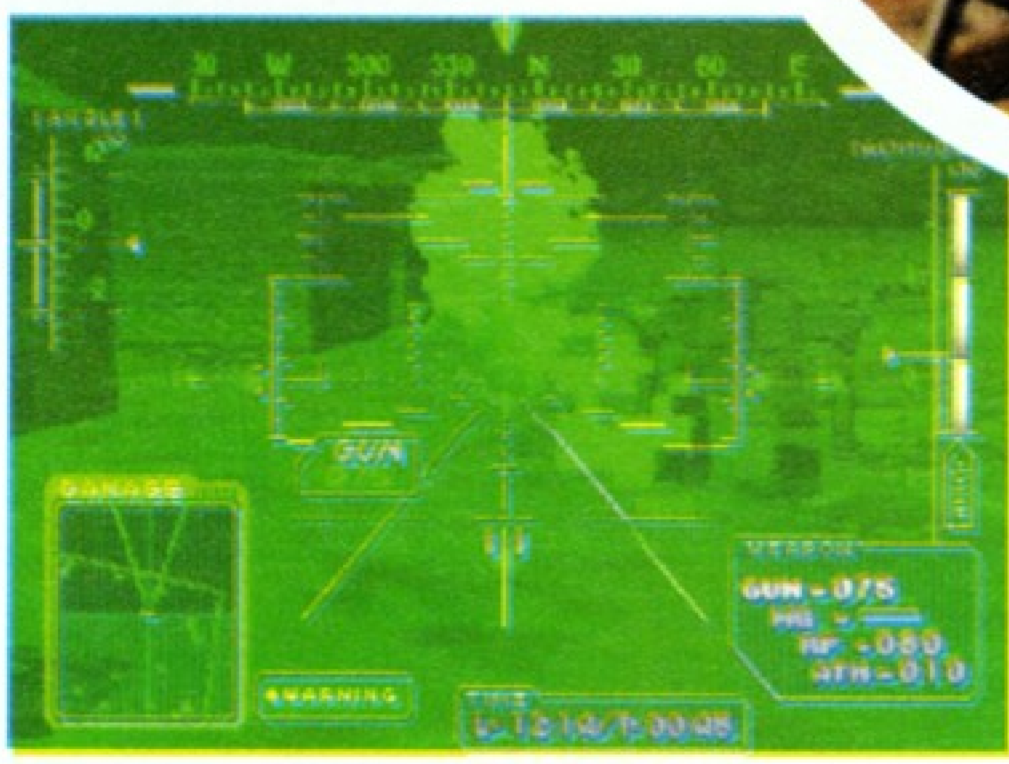






It might look a bit too sim like but it plays ace!





Being a mech-warrior is a full time job you know. Even when we're all tucked up in bed the night vision keeps it busy.

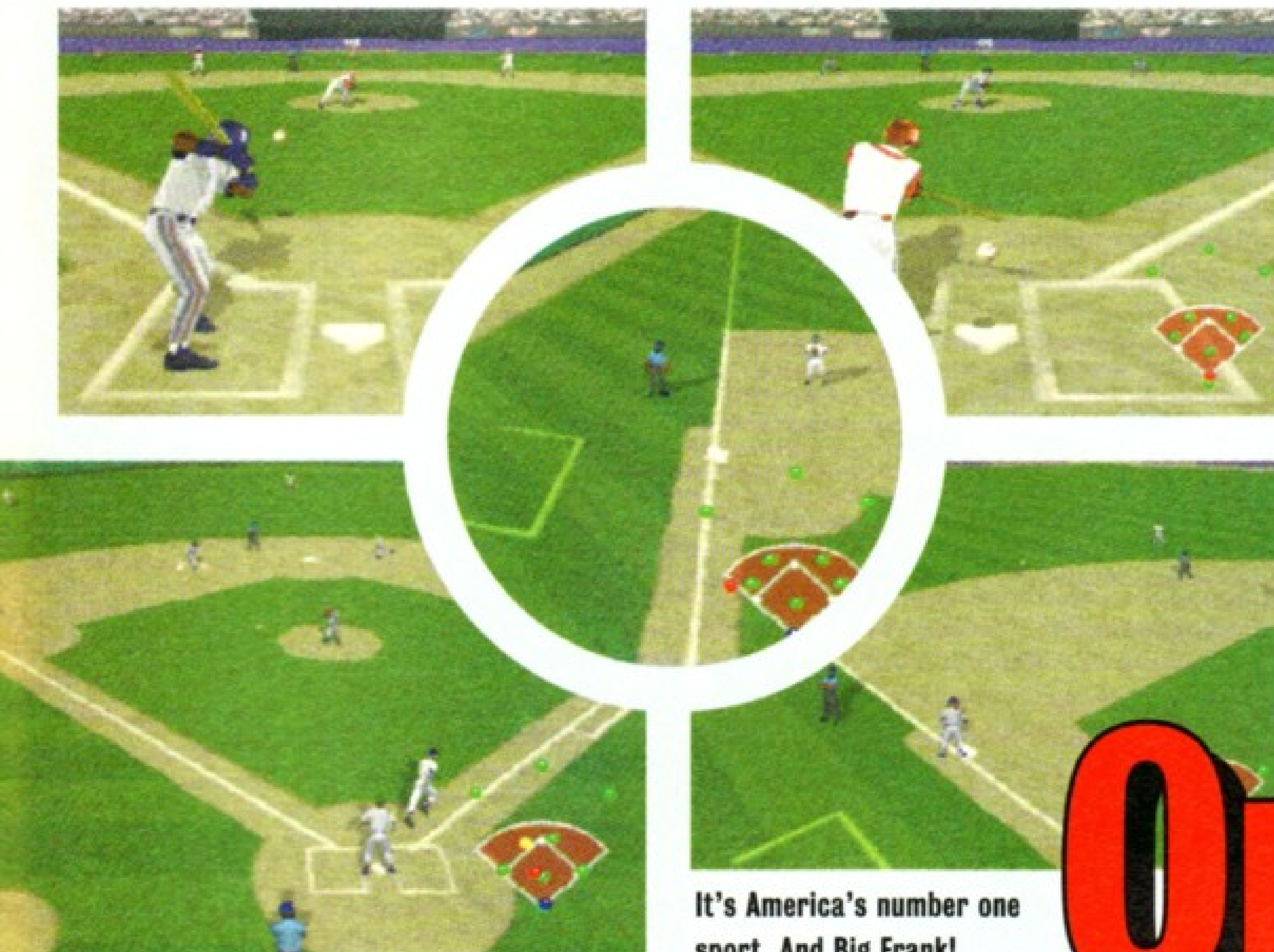






Frank Thomas BIG HURT BASEBALL

BY	ACCLAIM
PRICE	£44.99
RATING	★★



It's America's number one sport. And Big Frank!

Well, this is surely evidence enough that summer does indeed exist. Yep, you can be sure that over the next couple of months there will be tennis, cricket and baseball games released on *everything*. But, there's a bit of a problem with baseball games in that despite releasing dozens of videogame titles over the last couple of years, no one really cares much about baseball in this country. So, where American fans of the sport go bananas over the authentic players and realistic atmosphere, us Brits remain decidedly unamused about the whole thing.

But, despite the lack of a real baseball following over here, a few baseball games have done marginally well, just because the gameplay is pretty good. The problem is though, that even if you use loads of fancy graphics and multiple camera angles, the meat and potatoes of the title is still just hitting a ball around a field.

Which is exactly the problem with Big Hurt Baseball. The game plays well enough and it's even really good fun in two player mode – but there's nothing on offer that's different from any other baseball game around. So if you've got one, you've got them all. But if you haven't, you might just be interested in this.

Operation BLACKFIRE



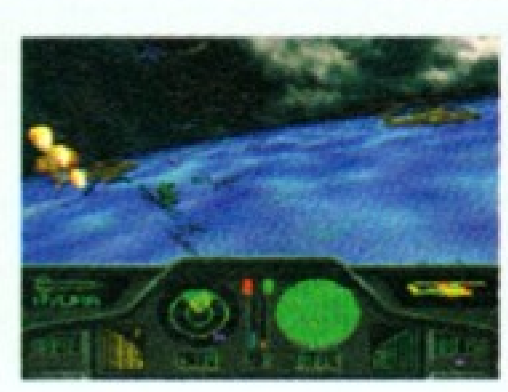
BY	VIRGIN
PRICE	£39.99
RATING	★★★

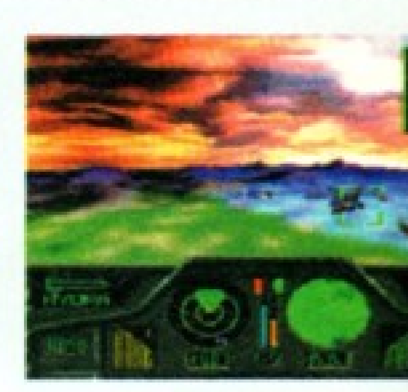
After the storming success of Firestorm at the beginning of the year, it was only a matter of time before everyone else got their helicopter titles out on the shelves. But surprisingly enough, Blackfire was released way before Firestorm. It was out in the States last year, although it was a bit of a low key release by Sega of America. Anyhow, Virgin have snapped it up for the UK and have probably released it at just about the right time – after all there's not much else like this being released at the moment. Luckily, the game's not bad either. Your mission is to, yes you've guessed it, save the world from a potential alien invasion! And to do this, you have to blow tons of enemies away. Bear in mind though, that when we say tons, we *mean* tons. At times it seems a little unfair that there's quite so many things to kill, and in this case this is what makes the game so damned annoying – the difficulty seems irrelevant when there's so many things to destroy. In addition to this, the graphics, while perfectly adequate, aren't exactly awe inspiring and even look a bit messy in places.

Overall, this will serve you well enough for a short time, but it's not something you'd come back to time and time again. Unless you love helicopter games that is.







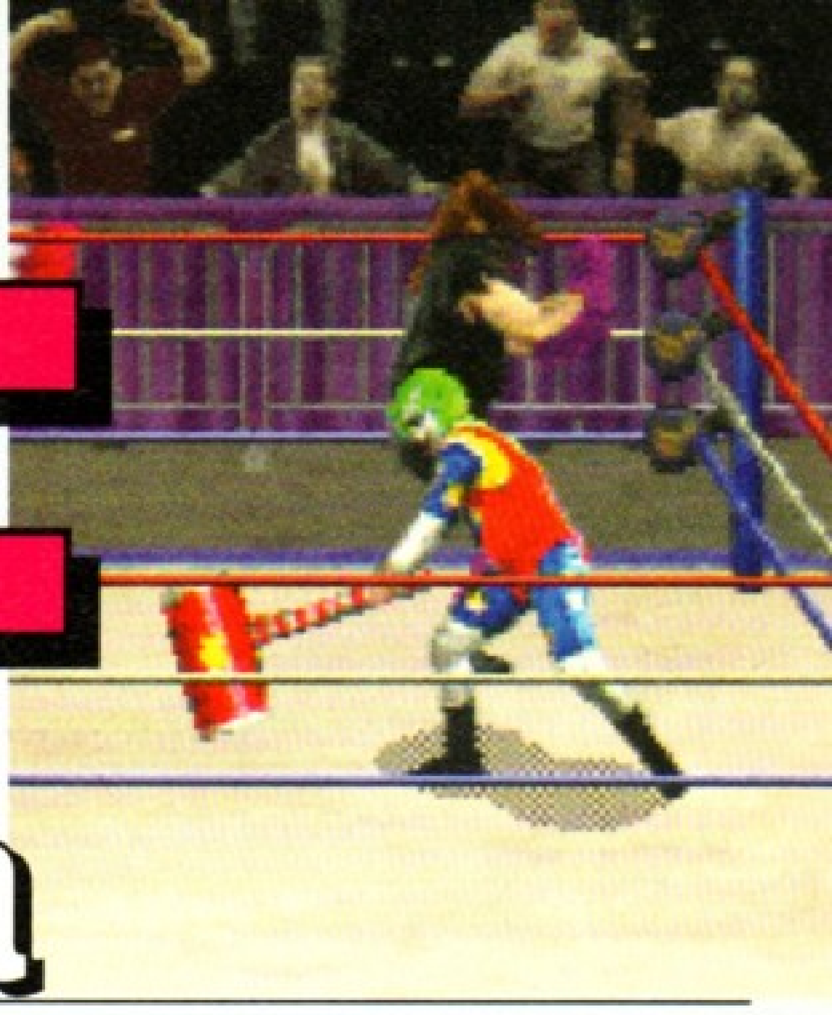






OUT NOW

WWF Wrestlemania



BY	ACCLAIM
PRICE	£44.99
RATING	★★★★

Yaay! The pantomime stars of the sporting world have returned yet again to restore glory to the gaming world! Donned in little more than spandex knickers and ridiculous hairdos, this peverted posse have dominated the carry-on style of game for years, and this new, updated version is no different! Of course, with this being on the Saturn and everything, the graphics are loads better than they ever were before and the moves, although carried out in the same way also seem more spectacular. As you'd expect, all the old WWF favourites can be found in the game and there's the usual choice between tournaments one-on-ones and tag team play. And, while this isn't going to have beat 'em up fans leaping around the room in uncontrolled ecstasy, anyone who's up for a bit of fun rather than totally serious button-pounding will find this brilliant.

It's a shame that more human players can't be controlled at once (two players are the maximum allowed) but WWF still stands up as a brilliant title that, despite a ridiculous licence is surprisingly playable.

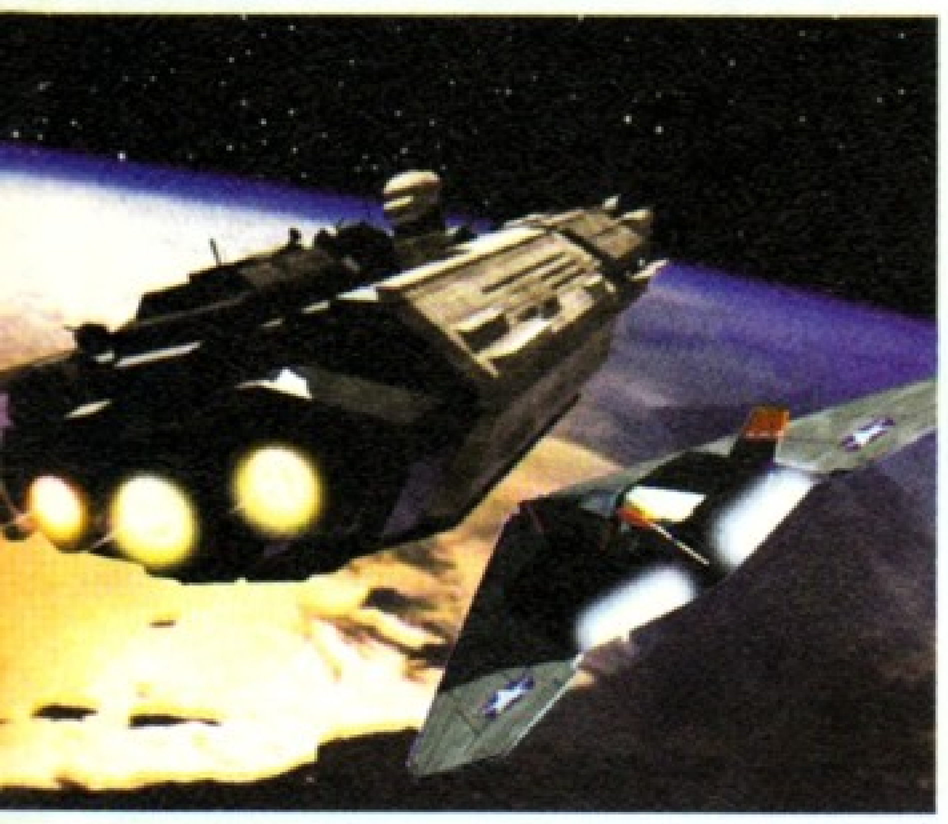






Shock Wave Assault

BY	EA
PRICE	£39.99
RATING	★★





Hello there. My name is Dr. Klien and I'm afraid what you're looking at here is what's known in the profession as a 'lame dame'.



Alien games are certainly flavour of the month at the moment, although it's probably fair to say that the Saturn hasn't had *quite* as many alien titles as other machines. Anyway, Shockwave Assault is the usual story of alien invasion on some far-off planet or other, where an expert team have been drafted in to restore peace and order through huge amounts of violence. And yes, that does mean that you get a fair smattering of movie style interactiveness, and as usual, it's completely useless and pretty cheesey too.

As for the gameplay, well, it's hard to say really. This did well on the 3DO, but maybe that's because they didn't have many of these types of games around at the time or something. It's certainly not much good on the Saturn. All you ever seem to do is roam around barren landscapes, targeting tripod type enemies then blowing them away. There's not enough stuff to kill to make this a riveting adventure and the game's atmosphere is incredibly dull.

THE NEED FOR SPEED

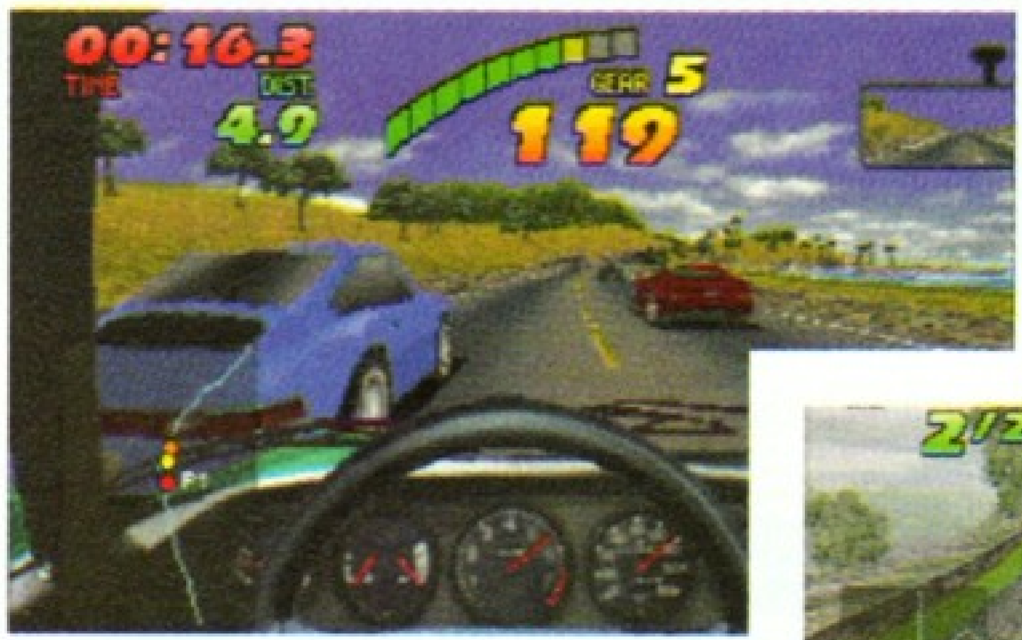


BY	EA
PRICE	£39.99
RATING	★★★

Need for Speed was certainly a huge success when it was released on the 3DO a couple of years back. Why, people even went out and bought a 3DO simply for the privilege of playing this game alone! But, people have become bit more cynical since then – the idea of splashing out on a machine simply for the pleasures of playing one game have sadly gone. But, luckily this doesn't matter too much, as EA have decided to release this across most of the "next generation" formats (apart from the Jaguar for some strange reason) and after a storming start on the Playstation, they're hoping for big things with the Saturn release.



And, to some extent, that's just what they've got. After all, this is pretty much the same release that was seen on the 3DO. But despite standing up well in the gameplay department, the graphics are beginning to look a bit dated. Actually, maybe that's a bit unfair. It's probably more to do with the fact that other racing titles such as Sega Rally look so good that everything else has a hard time measuring up. Fans of the in-depth driving sim approach will still get a kick out of this, but for most it's a bit too old-hat.









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DROP ZONE

BY	PHILIPS	PRICE	£14.99	RATING	★★★

Hooray! It's a film you might have heard of on Video CD! Drop Zone received mixed reviews on its cinematic release, but that's possibly because it had some competition from other big-budget movies. On the small silver-disc-based screen, however, it's a pretty sizable notch above the majority of its peers. The plot, such as there is, concerns a US Marshall on the trail of a skydiving murderer, which is the cue for lots of expensive stunts. In the manner of all good action movies there's not much here to trouble your brain, but plenty of work for your adrenal glands (if you're scared of heights). Basically, it's like Point Break with parachutes. But without Patrick Swayze, which is good.



RODEO BLOOPERS 1

BY	DDE	PRICE	£13.99	RATING	★

The rather ominous digit which rests at the end of this title forewarns the gentle viewer that further instalments of the Rodeo Bloopers saga are to follow. This is a bit unfortunate, especially given that no-one in the UK could give a toss about rodeos anyway. They're sort of like BMX competitions, but with live animals instead of expensive bikes. And more foolish competitors. Still, if the prospect of watching a bunch of cowboys fall off their horses or get trampled on by bulls seems entertaining to you, perhaps you'd like to check this out. Or you could just try making loud banging noises at a local gymkhana (but don't tell anyone we suggested it or we'll get in trouble).



CHARRO!

BY	DDE	PRICE	£14.99	RATING	★★

Blimey, DDE sure know how to market their products. The blurb on the back of Charro! tells us, stunningly, that Charro!, shot "was the only movie in which Elvis wore a beard". It's also probably the only Elvis movie without any musical numbers in it at all. And sadly these are the only two things of any interest about Charro!, which is otherwise a frankly boring Western with ol' snake hips cast as a reformed (and newly framed) outlaw on a mission to clear his name. Being Elvis Presley, not doing the singing thing – you know, all the good bits from his other movies – was a very bad decision. So was the beard, which makes him look like a dosser. Not as good as Bonanza.



MARILYN–PORTRAIT OF A LEGEND

BY	DDE	PRICE	£13.99	RATING	★★

Back in the old days, to call yourself a legend you had to fight a cyclops, or sit in a big wooden horse, or get lost at sea for twenty years. These days it's much easier – all you've got to do is flash your skirt up and kill yourself. That's not what I call a legend. Give me Perseus and his flying shoes any day. Anyway, this is typical of the muck-raking biopic/documentary which trades mostly on preconceptions and myths about one who is far too dead to sue. The most telling detail about Marilyn – POAL is that it features Elton John's unfortunate Candle In The Wind as a "poignant" backdrop. This gives you a clue as to how well-researched and un-sensationalist it is (ie – not very).



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COIN OPERATED

A couple of months ago, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE unveiled AM2's new Virtua Fighter 3 character, the Japanese dancer, Aoi. This month, Yu Suzuki reveals yet another character that will appear in this awesome game! Who is he? Well, pay attention, everyone...

The head of Sega's top R&D department AM2, Yu Suzuki, has been playing a game of cat and mouse with the VF hungry punters of the world! Five months ago, he presented the world the latest addition to the VF family, Aoi Umenokoji. She was very impressive with her traditional Japanese dance routines and realistic Aikido-esque moves, but not even this kimono-clad lass will prepare you for the latest VF fighter. Brace yourself as Sega Saturn magazine presents you the Sega equivalent of Tekken's Ganryu, Taka Arashi. Taka Arashi is indeed a lard ass of gigantic, almost unbelievable proportions. So what do we know about this mysterious Mr. Arashi? Read on





MOVE OVER E.HONDA, HERE COMES TAKA ARASHI!!

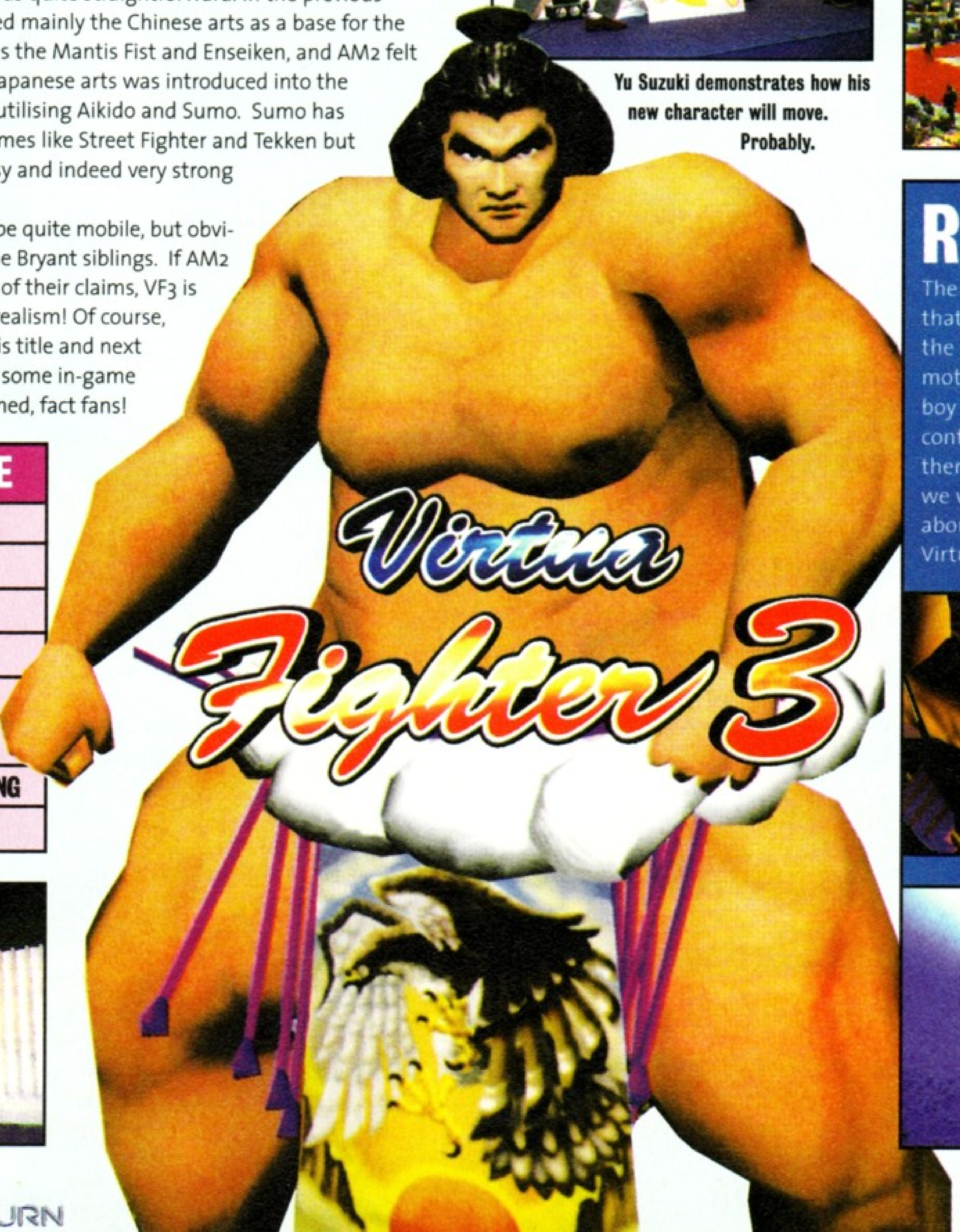
Taka Arashi was unveiled at the Tokyo Toy show where Mr. Suzuki went on stage to present his latest creation to the press and the public. When questioned as to why AM2 chose to use sumo as opposed to other disciplines that the VF series hasn't covered (like Shaolin), his answer was quite straightforward. In the previous Virtua Fighter games, the team used mainly the Chinese arts as a base for the characters fighting styles as such as the Mantis Fist and Enseiken, and AM2 felt that it was about time that a few Japanese arts was introduced into the series, hence the new contestants utilising Aikido and Sumo. Sumo has been used as a style in previous games like Street Fighter and Tekken but they never really conveyed the gutsy and indeed very strong techniques of the sport.

AM2 promise that Arashi will be quite mobile, but obviously not on par with the likes of the Bryant siblings. If AM2 manage to live up to the standards of their claims, VF3 is going to be a game of unmatched realism! Of course, we'll be keeping you updated on this title and next month, should be able to bring you some in-game shots of the new character! Stay tuned, fact fans!



Yu Suzuki demonstrates how his new character will move. Probably.





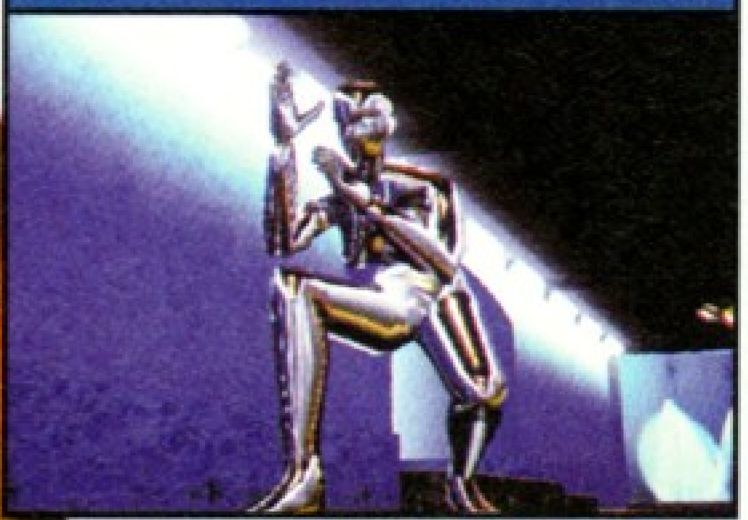
CHARACTER PROFILE	
NAME:	TAKA ARASHI
NATIONALITY:	JAPANESE
SEX:	MALE
AGE:	27
HEIGHT:	2m20
WEIGHT:	250Kg
DISCIPLINE:	SUMO WRESTLING
OCCUPATION:	PRO SUMOTORI



RUMOURS

The latest rumour from Japan that's *almost* been confirmed is the fact that Dural is indeed the mother of the VF's resident ninja boy Kage. AM2 haven't denied or confirmed it so the possibility is there and the other rumour is that we will finally know the truth about Dural in the forthcoming Virtua Fighter 3!!!

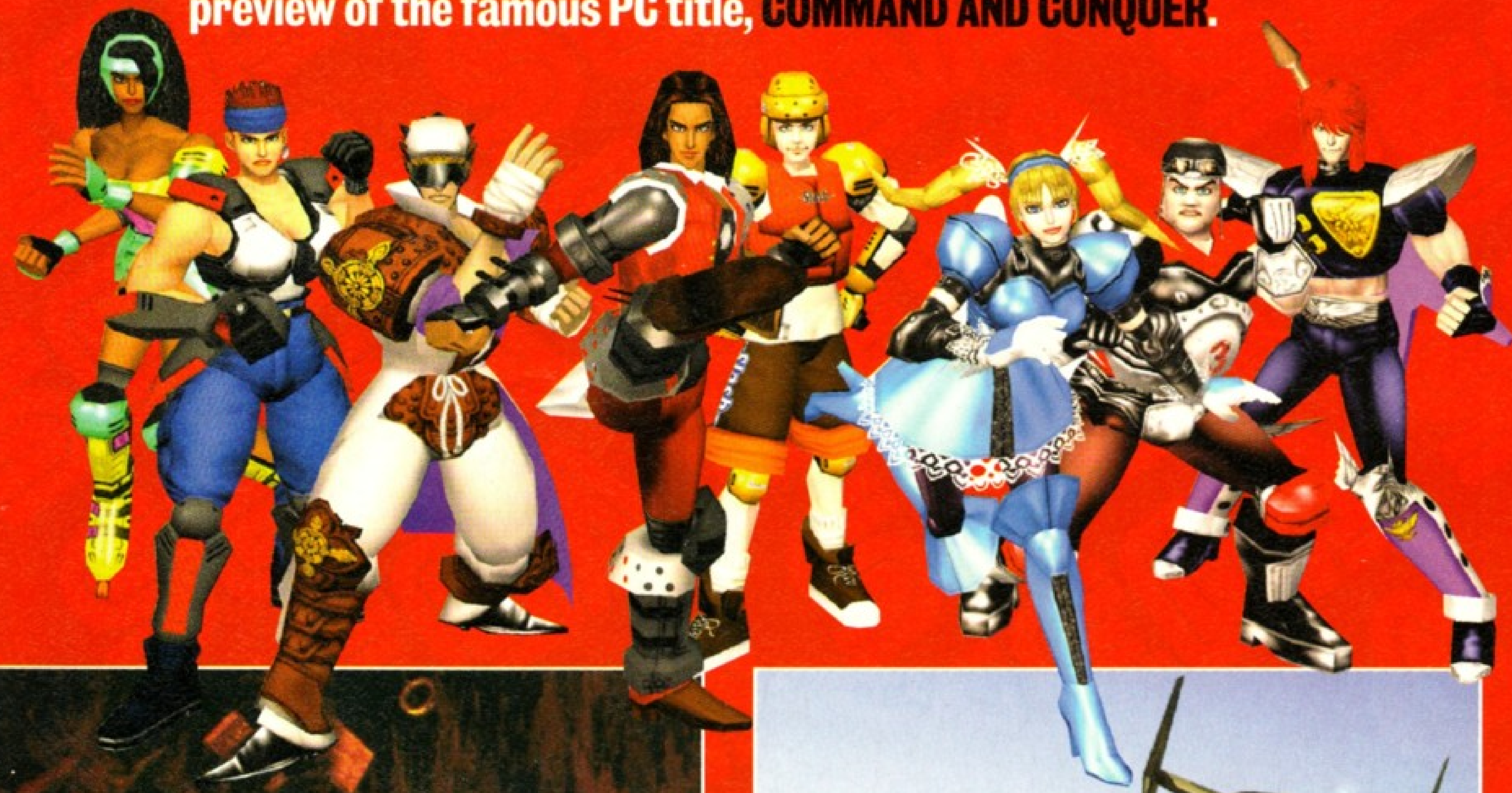






next Month

And that, my gaming chums, is your lot. But already your eager eyes turn to the future. 'Saturn Oracle' you say, 'what lies ahead for us in the pages of your illustrious publication?'. Well, looking into the great spiky Sonic ball, we see loads on FIGHTING VIPERS, DARK SAVIOUR and SONIC X-TREME. Stuff on BUG TOO!, and some news on the brilliant new RPG, TORICO, as well as a preview of the famous PC title, COMMAND AND CONQUER.







Agent of News,
I have just received word from headquaters that I am too proceed immediately to Plan X. This involves reserving a copy of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE. Should you do that for me I can guarantee your safety. However, should you refuse, I cannot be held responsible for a sudden twilight kidnapping followed by a bizarre ride in the boot of a Lada driving deep into the heart of Siberia.

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Be there, or be a four sided shape with 90 angles!

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Nights into Dreams DUE SEPTEMBER



Heart of Darkness DUE SEPTEMBER



Dungeon Keeper DUE AUGUST

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FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF *PROVISIONAL* RELEASE DATES FOR FORTHCOMING RELEASES. PLEASE REMEMBER THESE ARE INTENDED AS A GUIDE ONLY AND WE CANNOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY CHANGES OR DELAYS.

Alien Trilogy	October
Baku Baku Animal	end July
Criticom	early July
Dawn of Darkness	21st June
Deadly Skies	September
Destruction derby	August
Doom	September
Fade to Black	August
Ghen War	August
Hexen	August
Legend of Thor	Early July
Loaded	July
Mortal Kombat 3	mid July
Need for Speed	5th July
Nights into Dreams	August
Offensive	19th July
Olympic Games	end July
Road Rash	12th July
Shockwave Assault	5th July
Slam n Jam '96	early July
Spycraft	August
Swagman	September
Tomb Raider	September
Tunnel B1	26th July
Viper	26th July
Waterworld	19th July

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DESTRUCTION DERBY



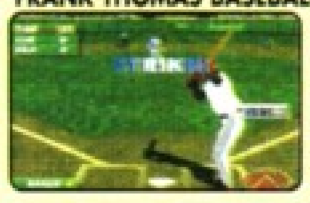
LEGEND OF THOR



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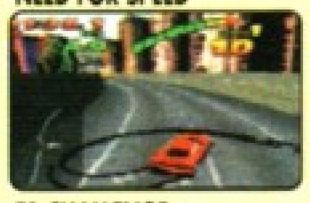


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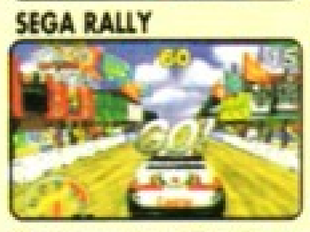
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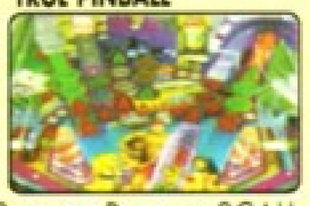
STREETFIGHTER ALPHA



SHINING WISDOM

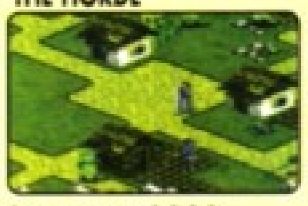


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6. WIPEOUT
7. VIRTUA COP & GUN
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9. SEGA RALLY
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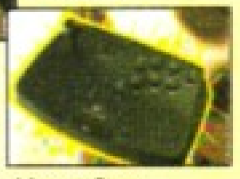
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